

Wm. Scarfield

THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
MR. WILLIAM COLLINS.
WITH
MEMOIRS of the AUTHOR;
AND
OBSERVATIONS
ON
His GENIUS and WRITINGS.
BY J. LANGHORNE.

Son pure i nostri figli

Propagini celesti:

Non spegnerà il suo seme.

GUAR.

L O N D O N :

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MEMOIRS of the AUTHOR.

THE enthusiasm of poetry, like that of religion, has frequently a powerful influence on the conduct of life, and either throws it into the retreat of uniform obscurity, or marks it with irregularities that lead to misery and disquiet. The gifts of imagination bring the heaviest task upon the vigilance of reason ; and to bear those faculties with unerring rectitude, or invariable propriety, requires a degree of firmness and of cool attention which doth not always attend the higher gifts of the mind. Yet, difficult as nature herself seems to have rendered the task of regularity to genius, it is the supreme consolation of *dulness* and *folly*, to point with gothic triumph to these excesses, which are the overflowings of faculties they never enjoyed. Perfectly unconscious that they are indebted to their stupidity for the consistency of their conduct, they plume themselves on an imaginary virtue, which has its origin in what is really their disgrace.—Let such, if such dare approach the shrine of COLLINS, withdraw to a respectful distance, and, should they

behold the ruins of genius, or the weakness of an exalted mind, let them be taught to lament that nature has left the noblest of their works imperfect.

OF such men of genius as have borne no public character, it seldom happens that any memoirs can be collected, of consequence enough to be recorded by the biographer. If their lives pass in obscurity, they are generally too uniform to engage our attention; if they cultivate and obtain popularity, envy and malignity will mingle their poison with the draughts of praise; and through the industry of those unwearied fiends, their reputation will be so chequered, and their characters so disguised, that it shall become difficult for the historian to separate truth from falsehood.

OF our exalted poet, whose life, though far from being popular, did not altogether pass in privacy, we meet with few other accounts than such as the life of every man will afford, *viz.* when he was born, where he was educated, and where he died. Yet even these simple memoirs of the man will not be unacceptable to those who admire the poet: for we never receive pleasure without a desire to be acquainted with the source from whence it springs; a species of curiosity, which, as it seems

to be instinctive, was, probably, given us for the noble end of gratitude ; and, finally, to elevate the enquiries of the mind to that fountain of perfection from which all human excellence is derived.

CHICHESTER, a city in Suffex, had the honour of giving birth to the author of the following poems, about the year 1721. His father, who was a reputable tradesman in that city, intended him for the service of the church ; and with this view, in the year 1733, he was admitted a scholar of that illustrious seminary of genius and learning, Winchester college, where so many distinguished men of letters, so many excellent poets have received their classical education. Here he had the good fortune to continue seven years under the care of the very learned Dr. Burton ; and at the age of nineteen, in the year 1740, he had merit sufficient to procure a distinguished place in the list of those scholars, who are elected, upon the foundation of Winchester, to New College in Oxford. But as there were then no vacancies in that society, he was admitted a commoner of Queen's College in the same university ; where he continued till July 1741, when he was elected a demy of Magdalen College. During his residence at Queen's, he was at once distinguished for genius and indolence ; his

exercifes, when he could be prevailed upon to write, bearing the vifible characteristics of both. This remifs and inattentive habit might probably arife, in fome meafure, from difappointment: he had, no doubt, indulged very high ideas of the academical mode of education, and when he found fcience within the fetters of logic and of Aristotle, it was no wonder if he abated of his diligence to feek her where the fearch was attended with artificial perplexities, and where, at laft, the purfuer would grasp the fhadow for the fubftance.

WHILE he was at Magdalen College, he applied himfelf chiefly to the cultivation of poetry, and wrote the epiftle to Sir Thomas Hanmer, and the Oriental Eclogues, which, in the year 1742, were publifhed under the title of *Persian Eclogues*.—The fuccefs of thefe poems was far from being equal to their merit; but to a novice in the purfuit of fame, the leaft encouragement is fufficient: if he does not at once acquire that reputation to which his merit intitles him, he embraces the encomiums of the few, forgives the many, and intends to open their eyes to the ftriking beauties of his next Publication.

WITH profpects fuch as thefe, probably, Mr. Collins indulged his fancy, when, in the year 1743,

after having taken the degree of a batchelor of arts, he left the university, and removed to London.

To a man of small fortune, a liberal spirit, and uncertain dependencies, the metropolis is a very dangerous place. Mr. Collins had not been long in town before he became an instance of the truth of this observation. His pecuniary resources were exhausted, and to restore them by the exertion of genius and learning, though he wanted not the power, he had neither steadiness nor industry. His necessities, indeed, sometimes carried him as far as a scheme, or a title page for a book; but, whether it were the power of dissipation, or the genius of repose that interfered, he could proceed no farther. Several books were projected, which he was very able to execute; and he became, in idea, an historian, a critic, and a dramatic poet by turns. At one time he determined to write an history of the revival of Letters; at another to translate and comment upon Aristotle's Poetics; then he turned his thoughts to the Drama, and proceeded so far towards a tragedy—as to become acquainted with the manager.

UNDER this unaccountable dissipation, he suffered the greatest inconveniencies. Day succeeded day, for the support of which he had made no provision, and in which he was to subsist either by the

long-repeated contributions of a friend, or the generosity of a casual acquaintance. — Yet indolence triumphed at once over want and shame ; and neither the anxieties of poverty, nor the heart-burning of dependance had power to animate resolution to perseverance.

As there is a degree of depravity into which if a man falls, he becomes incapable of attending to any of the ordinary means that recall men to virtue, so there are some circumstances of indigence so extremely degrading, that they destroy the influences of shame itself ; and most spirits are apt to sink, under their oppression, into a sullen and unambitious despondence.

HOWEVER this might be with regard to Mr. Collins, we find that, in the year 1746, he had spirit and resolution enough to publish his *Odes descriptive and allegorical*. Mr. MILLAR, a bookseller in the *Strand*, and a favourer of genius, *when once it has made its way to fame*, published them ON THE AUTHOR'S ACCOUNT. — He happened, indeed, to be in the right not to publish them on his own ; for the sale was by no means successful : and hence it was that the author, conceiving a just indignation against a blind and tasteless age, burnt the remaining copies with his own hands.

ALLEGORICAL and abstracted poetry was above the taste of those times, as much, or more than it is of the present. It is in the lower walks, the plain and practical paths of the muses only that the generality of men can be entertained. The higher efforts of imagination are above their capacity; and it is no wonder therefore, if the Odes descriptive and allegorical met with few admirers.

UNDER these circumstances, so mortifying to every just expectation, when neither his wants were relieved, nor his reputation extended, he found some consolation in changing the scene, and visiting his uncle, colonel MARTIN, who was, at that time, with our army in Flanders. Soon after his arrival, the colonel died, and left him a considerable fortune.

HERE, then, we should hope to behold him happy; possessed of independence, and removed from every scene, and every monument of his former misery. But, fortune had delayed her favours till they were not worth receiving. His faculties had been so long harrassed by anxiety, dissipation, and distress, that he fell into a nervous disorder, which brought with it an unconquerable depression of spirits, and at length reduced the finest understanding to the most deplorable childishness. In the first

stages of his disorder he attempted to relieve himself by travel, and passed into France; but the growing malady obliged him to return; and having continued, with short intervals *, in this pitiable state till the year 1756, he died in the arms of a sister at Chichester.

MR. Collins was, in stature, somewhat above the middle size; of a brown complexion, keen, expressive eyes, and a fixed, sedate aspect, which, from intense thinking, had contracted an habitual frown. His proficiency in letters was greater than could have been expected from his years. He was skilled in the learned languages, and acquainted with the *Italian, French, and Spanish*.—It is observable that none of his poems bear the marks of an amorous disposition, and that he is one of those few poets, who have sailed to Delphi, without touching at Cythera. The allusions of this kind that appear in his *Oriental Eclogues* were indispensable in that species of poetry; and it is very remarkable that in his *Passions*, an ode for music, love is omitted, though it should have made a principal figure there.

* It seems to have been in one of these intervals, that he was visited by an ingenious friend, who tells us he found him with a book in his hand, and being asked what it was, he answered, that "he had but one book, but that was the best." It was the New-Testament in English.

ORIENTAL ECLOGUES.

B

E C L O G U E I.

SELIM; *or, the* SHEPHERD's MORAL.SCENE, *a valley near* BAGDAT.*Time, the Morning.*

YE Persian maids, attend your poet's lays,
 And hear how shepherds pass their golden days.
 Not all are blest, whom fortune's hand sustains
 With wealth in courts, nor all that haunt the plains:
 Well may your hearts believe the truths I tell;
 'Tis virtue makes the bliss, where'er we dwell.

Thus Selim sung, by sacred truth inspir'd;
 Nor praise, but such as truth bestow'd desir'd:
 Wise in himself, his meaning songs conveyed
 Informing morals to the shepherd maid;
 Or taught the swains that surest bliss to find,
 What groves nor streams bestow, a virtuous mind

When sweet and blushing, like a virgin bride,
 The radiant morn resum'd her orient pride,
 When wanton gales along the valleys play,
 Breathe on each flower, and bear their sweets away;
 By Tigris' wand'ring waves he sat, and sung
 This useful lesson for the fair and young.

Ye Persian dames, he said, to you belong,
 Well may they please, the morals of my song:

No fairer maids, I trust than you are found,
 Grac'd with soft arts, the peopled world around !
 The morn that lights you, to your loves supplies
 Each gentler ray delicious to your eyes :
 For you those flowers her fragrant hand bestow,
 And yours the love that kings delight to know.
 Yet think not these, all beauteous as they are,
 The best kind blessings heaven can grant the fair !
 Who trust alone in beauty's feeble ray,
 Boast but the worth Bassora's pearls display ;
 Drawn from the deep we own their surface bright,
 But, dark within, they drink no lustrous light :
 Such are the maids, and such the charms they boast,
 By sense unaided, or to virtue lost.
 Self-flattering sex ! your hearts believe in vain
 That love shall blind, when once he fires the swain ;
 Or hope a lover by your faults to win,
 As spots on ermin beautify the skin :
 Who seeks secure to rule, be first her care
 Each softer virtue that adorns the fair ;
 Each tender passion man delights to find,
 The lov'd perfections of a female mind !

Blest were the days, when Wisdom held her reign,
 And shepherds sought her on the silent plain ;
 With Truth she wedded in the secret grove,
 Immortal Truth, and daughters blest'd their love.

O haste, fair maids ! ye Virtues come away,
 Sweet Peace and Plenty lead you on your way !

The balmy shrub, for you shall love our shore,
By Ind excell'd or Araby no more.

Loft to our fields, for so the fates ordain,
The dear deserters shall return again.
Come thou, whose thoughts as limpid springs are clear,
To lead the train, sweet Modesty appear :
Here make thy court amidst our rural scene,
And shepherd-girls shall own thee for their queen.
With thee be Chastity, of all afraid,
Distrusting all, a wise suspicious maid ;
But man the most—not more the mountain doe
Holds the swift falcon for her deadly foe.
Cold is her breast, like flowers that drink the dew ;
A filken veil conceals her from the view.
No wild desires amidst thy train be known,
But Faith, whose heart is fix'd on one alone :
Desponding Meekness, with her down-cast eyes,
And friendly Pity, full of tender sighs ;
And Love the last : by these your hearts approve,
These are the virtues that must lead to love.

Thus sung the swain ; and ancient legends say,
The maids of Bagdat verified the lay :
Dear to the plains, the Virtues came along,
The shepherds lov'd, and Selim blest'd his song.

E C L O G U E II.

HASSAN; *or, the* CAMEL-DRIVER.SCENE, *the* DESERT.*Time, Mid-day.*

IN silent horror o'er the boundless waste
 The driver Hassan with his camels past :
 One cruise of water on his back he bore,
 And his light scrip contain'd a scanty store ;
 A fan of painted feathers in his hand,
 To guard his shaded face from scorching sand.
 The sultry sun had gain'd the middle sky,
 And not a tree, and not an herb was nigh ;
 The beasts, with pain, their dusty way pursue,
 Shrill roar'd the winds, and dreary was the view !
 With desperate sorrow wild, th' affrighted man
 Thrice sigh'd, thrice struck his breast, and thus began :
 " Sad was the hour, and luckless was the day,
 " When first from Schiraz' walls I bent my way !"
 Ah ! little thought I of the blasting wind,
 The thirst or pinching hunger that I find !
 Bethink thee, Hassan, where shall Thirst assuage,
 When fails this cruise, his unrelenting rage ?

Soon shall this scrip its precious load resign;
Then what but tears and hunger shall be thine?

Ye mute companions of my toils, that bear
In all my griefs a more than equal share!
Here, where no springs in murmurs break away,
Or moss-crown'd fountains mitigate the day,
In vain ye hope the green delights to know,
Which plains more blest, or verdant vales bestow:
Here rocks alone, and tasteless sands are found,
And faint and sickly winds for ever howl around.

“ Sad was the hour, and luckless was the day,
“ When first from Schiraz’ walls I bent my way!”

Curst be the gold and silver which persuade
Weak men to follow far-fatiguing trade!
The lilly peace outshines the silver store,
And life is dearer than the golden ore:
Yet money tempts us o’er the desert brown,
To every distant mart and wealthy town.
Full oft we tempt the land, and oft the sea:
And are we only yet repay’d by thee?
Ah! why was ruin so attractive made,
Or why fond man so easily betray’d?
Why heed we not, while mad we haste along,
The gentle voice of peace, or pleasure’s song?
Or wherefore think the flowery mountain’s side,
The fountain’s murmurs, and the valley’s pride,
Why think we these less pleasing to behold,
Than dreary deserts, if they lead to gold?

“ Sad was the hour, and luckless was the day,

“ When first from Schiraz’ walls I bent my way !”

O cease, my fears !—all frantic as I go,

When thought creates unnumber’d scenes of woe,

What if the lion in his rage I meet !—

Oft in the dust I view his printed feet :

And fearful ! oft, when day’s declining light

Yields her pale empire to the mourner night,

By hunger rous’d, he scours the groaning plain,

Gaunt wolves and fullen tygers in his train :

Before them death with shrieks directs their way,

Fills the wild yell, and leads them to their prey.

“ Sad was the hour, and luckless was the day,

“ When first from Schiraz’ walls I bent my way !”

At that dead hour the silent asp shall creep,

If aught of rest I find, upon my sleep :

Or some swollen serpent twist his scales around,

And wake to anguish with a burning wound.

Thrice happy they, the wise contented poor,

From lust of wealth, and dread of death secure !

They tempt no deserts, and no griefs they find ;

Peace rules the day, where reason rules the mind.

“ Sad was the hour, and luckless was the day,

“ When first from Schiraz’ walls I bent my way !”

O hapless youth ! for she thy love hath won,

The tender Zara will be most undone !

Big swell’d my heart, and own’d the powerful maid,

When fast she dropt her tears, as thus she said :

" Farewell the youth whom sighs could not detain,
 " Whom Zara's breaking heart implor'd in vain !
 " Yet as thou go'st, may every blast arise
 " Weak and unfelt as these rejected sighs !
 " Safe o'er the wild, no perils may'st thou see,
 " No griefs endure, nor weep, false youth, like me."

O let me safely to the fair return,
 Say with a kiss, she must not, shall not mourn !
 O ! let me teach my heart to lose its fears,
 Recall'd by Wisdom's voice, and Zara's tears.

He said, and call'd on heaven to bless the day,
 When back to Schiraz' walls he bent his way.

E C L O G U E III.

ABRA; *or, the* GEORGIAN SULTANA.SCENE, *a* FOREST.*Time, the Evening.*

IN Georgia's land, where Teflis' towers are seen,
 In distant view along the level green,
 While evening dews enrich the glittering glade,
 And the tall forests cast a longer shade,
 What time 'tis sweet o'er fields of rice to stray,
 Or scent the breathing maize at setting day;
 Amidst the maids of Zagen's peaceful grove,
 Emyra sung the pleasing cares of love.

Of Abra first began the tender strain,
 Who led her youth with flocks upon the plain:
 At morn she came those willing flocks to lead,
 Where lilies rear them in the watery mead;
 From early dawn the live-long hours she told,
 'Till late at silent eve she penn'd the fold.
 Deep in the grove, beneath the secret shade,
 A various wreath of odorous flowers she made:
 * Gay-motley'd pinks and sweet jonquils she chose,
 The violet blue that on the moss-bank grows;

* That these flowers are found in very great abundance in some of the provinces of Persia; see the modern history of Mr. Salmon.

All-sweet to sense, the flaunting rose was there :
The finish'd chaplet well-adorn'd her hair.

Great Abbas chanc'd that fated morn to stray,
By love conducted from the chace away ;
Among the vocal vales he heard her song,
And sought the vales and echoing groves among :
At length he found, and woo'd the rural maid ;
She knew the monarch, and with tear obey'd.

“ Be every youth like royal Abbas mov'd,

“ And every Georgian maid like Abra lov'd !”

The royal lover bore her from the plain ;
Yet still her crook and bleating flock remain :
Oft as she went, she backward turn'd her view,
And bad that crook and bleating flock adieu.
Fair happy maid ! to other scenes remove,
To richer scenes of golden power and love !
Go leave the simple pipe, and shepherd's strain ;
With love delight thee, and with Abbas reign.

“ Be every youth like royal Abbas mov'd,

“ And every Georgian maid like Abra lov'd !”

Yet midst the blaze of courts she fix'd her love
On the cool fountain, or the shady grove ;
Still with the shepherd's innocence her mind
To the sweet vale, and flowery mead inclin'd ;
And oft as spring renew'd the plains with flowers,
Breath'd his soft gales, and led the fragrant hours,
With sure return she sought the sylvan scene,
The breezy mountains, and the forests green.

Her maids around her mov'd, a duteous band!
 Each bore a crook all-rural in her hand:
 Some simple lay, of flocks and herds they sung;
 With joy the mountain, and the forest rung.

“ Be every youth like royal Abbas mov'd,
 “ And every Georgian maid like Abra lov'd!

And oft the royal lover left the care
 And thorns of state, attendant on the fair;
 Oft to the shades and low-roof'd cots retir'd,
 Or sought the vale where first his heart was fir'd:
 A russet mantle, like a swain, he wore,
 And thought of crowns and busy courts no more.

“ Be every youth like royal Abbas mov'd,
 “ And every Georgian maid like Abra lov'd!”

Blest was the life, that royal Abbas led:
 Sweet was his love, and innocent his bed.
 What if in wealth the noble maid excel;
 The simple shepherd girl can love as well.
 Let those who rule on Persia's jewell'd throne,
 Be fam'd for love, and gentlest love alone;
 Or wreath, like Abbas, full of fair renown,
 The lover's myrtle with the warrior's crown.
 O happy days! the maids around her say;
 O haste, profuse of blessings, haste away!
 “ Be every youth, like royal Abbas, mov'd;
 “ And every Georgian maid, like Abra, lov'd!

E C L O G U E IV.

AGIB *and* SECANDER; *or, the* FUGITIVES.

SCENE, *a Mountain in* CIRCASSIA.

Time, Midnight.

I N fair Circassia, where, to love inclin'd,
 Each swain was blest, for every maid was kind;
 At that still hour, when awful midnight reigns,
 And none, but wretches, haunt the twilight plains;
 What time the moon had hung her lamp on high,
 And past in radiance thro' the cloudless sky;
 Sad o'er the dews, two brother shepherds fled,
 Where wildering fear and desperate sorrow led:
 Fast as they prest their flight, behind them lay
 Wide ravag'd plains, and vallies stole away.
 Along the mountain's bending sides they ran,
 'Till faint and weak Secander thus began:

SECANDER.

O stay thee, Agib, for my feet deny,
 No longer friendly to my life, to fly.
 Friend of my heart, O turn thee and survey,
 Trace our sad flight thro' all its length of way!

And first review that long extended plain,
 And yon wide groves, already past with pain!
 Yon ragged cliff, whose dangerous path we tried!
 And last this lofty mountain's weary side!

A G I B.

Weak as thou art, yet hapless must thou know
 The toils of flight, or some severer woe!
 Still as I haste, the Tartar shouts behind,
 And shrieks and sorrows load the saddening wind:
 In rage of heart, with ruin in his hand,
 He blasts our harvests, and deforms our land.
 Yon citron grove, whence first in fear we came,
 Droops its fair honours to the conquering flame:
 Far fly the swains, like us in deep despair,
 And leave to ruffian bands their fleecy care.

S E C A N D E R.

Unhappy land, whose blessings tempt the sword,
 In vain, unheard, thou call'st thy Persian lord!
 In vain thou court'st him, helpless, to thine aid,
 To shield the shepherd and protect the maid:
 Far off, in thoughtless indolence resign'd,
 Soft dreams of love and pleasure soothe his mind:
 'Midst fair sultanas lost in idle joy,
 No wars alarm him, and no fears annoy.

A G I B.

Yet these green hills, in summer's sultry heat,
 Have left the monarch oft a cool retreat.

Sweet to the sight is Zabran's flowery plain,
 And once by maids and shepherds lov'd in vain!
 No more the virgins shall delight to rove
 By Sargis banks, or Irwan's shady grove;
 On Tarkie's mountain catch the cooling gale,
 Or breathe the sweets of Aly's flowery vale:
 Fair scenes! but, ah! no more with peace possess,
 With ease alluring, and with plenty blest.
 No more the shepherd's whitening tents appear,
 Nor the kind products of a bounteous year;
 No more the date, with snowy blossoms crown'd!
 But ruin spreads her baleful fires around.

S E C A N D E R.

In vain Circassia boasts her spicy groves,
 For ever fam'd for pure and happy loves:
 In vain she boasts her fairest of the fair,
 Their eye's blue languish, and their golden hair!
 Those eyes in tears their fruitless grief must send;
 Those hairs the Tartar's cruel hand shall rend.

A G I B.

Ye Georgian swains that piteous learn from far
 Circassia's ruin, and the waste of war;
 Some weightier arms than crooks and staves prepare,
 To shield your harvest, and defend your fair:
 The Turk and Tartar like designs pursue,
 Fix'd to destroy, and stedfast to undo.
 Wild as his land, in native deserts bred,
 By lust incited, or by malice led,

The villain Arab, as he prowls for prey,
Oft marks with blood and wasting flames the way;
Yet none so cruel as the Tartar foe,
To death inur'd, and nurs'd in scenes of woe.

He said; when loud along the vale was heard
A shriller shriek, and nearer fires appear'd:
Th' affrighted shepherds thro' the dews of night,
Wide o'er the moon-light hills renew'd their flight.

O D E S

DESCRIPTIVE and ALLEGORICAL.

D

O D E T O P I T Y.

O Thou, the friend of man assign'd,
 With balmy hands his wounds to bind,
 And charm his frantic woe :
 When first Distress, with dagger keen,
 Broke forth to waste his destin'd scene,
 His wild unfated foe !

By Pella's Bard, a magic name,
 By all the griefs his thought could frame,
 Receive my humble rite :
 Long, Pity, let the nations view
 Thy sky-worn robes of tenderest blue,
 And eyes of dewy light !

But wherefore need I wander wide
 To old Ilissus' distant side,
 Deserted stream, and mute ?
 Wild Arun† too has heard thy strains,
 And Echo, 'midst thy native plains,
 Been sooth'd by Pity's lute.

There first the wren thy myrtles shed
 On gentlest Otway's infant head,

† A river in Sussex.

To him thy cell was shewn ;
 And while he sung the female heart,
 With youth's soft notes unspoil'd by art,
 Thy turtles mix'd their own.

Come, Pity, come, by fancy's aid,
 Ev'n now my thoughts, relenting maid,
 Thy temple's pride design :
 Its southern site, its truth compleat
 Shall raise a wild enthusiast heat,
 In all who view the shrine.

There Picture's toil shall well relate,
 How chance, or hard involving fate
 O'er mortal bliss prevail :
 The buskin'd Muse shall near her stand,
 And sighing prompt her tender hand,
 With each disastrous tale.

There let me oft, retir'd by day,
 In dreams of passion melt away,
 Allow'd with thee to dwell :
 There waite the mournful lamp of night,
 Till, Virgin, thou again delight
 To hear a British shell !

O D E T O F E A R.

THOU, to whom the world unknown
 With all its shadowy shapes is shewn;
 Who seest appall'd th' unreal scene,
 While Fancy lifts the veil between:

Ah Fear! ah frantic Fear!

I see, I see thee near.

I know thy hurried step, thy haggard eye!
 Like thee I start, like thee disorder'd fly;
 For, lo what monsters in thy train appear!
 Danger, whose limbs of giant mold
 What mortal eye can fix'd behold?
 Who stalks his round, an hideous form,
 Howling amidst the midnight storm,
 Or throws him on the ridgy steep
 Of some loose hanging rock to sleep:
 And with him thousand phantoms join'd,
 Who prompt to deeds accurs'd the mind:
 And those, the fiends, who near allied,
 O'er Nature's wounds, and wrecks preside;
 While Vengeance, in the lurid air,
 Lifts her red arm, expos'd and bare:
 On whom that ravening Brood of fate,
 Who lap the blood of Sorrow, wait:
 Who, Fear, this ghastly train can see,
 And look not madly wild, like thee?

E P O D E.

In earliest Greece, to thee, with partial choice,
 The grief-full Muse address'd her infant tongue :
 The maids and matrons, on her awful voice
 Silent and pale in wild amusement hung.
 Yet he, the Bard * who first invoc'd thy name,
 Disdain'd in Marathon its power to feel :
 For not alone he nurs'd the poet's flame,
 But reach'd from Virtue's hand the patriot's steel.
 But who is he, whom later garlands grace,
 Who left a-while o'er Hybla's dews to rove,
 With trembling eyes thy dreary steps to trace,
 Where thou and Furies shar'd the baleful grove ?
 Wrapt in thy cloudy veil th' incestuous Queen †
 Sigh'd the sad call her son and husband heard,
 When once alone it broke the silent scene,
 And he the wretch of Thebes no more appear'd.
 O Fear ! I know thee by thy throbbing heart,
 Thy withering power inspir'd each mournful line,
 Tho' gentle Pity claim her mingled part,
 Yet all the thunders of the scene are thine !

A N T I S T R O P H E.

Thou who such weary lengths has past,
 Where wilt thou rest, mad Nymph, at last ?

* Æschylus.

† Jocasta.

Say, wilt thou shroud in haunted cell,
 Where gloomy Rape and Murder dwell?
 Or in some hollow'd feat,
 'Gainst which the big waves beat,
 Hear drowning seamens cries in tempests brought!
 Dark power, with shuddering meek submitted thought,
 Be mine, to read the visions old,
 Which thy awakening bards have told:
 And, lest thou meet my blasted view,
 Hold each strange tale devoutly true;
 Ne'er be I found, by thee o'er-aw'd,
 In that thrice hallow'd eve abroad,
 When ghosts, as cottage-maids believe,
 Their pebbled beds permitted leave,
 And goblins haunt from fire, or fen,
 Or mine, or flood, the walks of men!

O thou whose spirit most possessest
 The sacred seat of Shakespear's breast!
 By all that from thy prophet broke,
 In thy divine emotions spoke!
 Hither again thy fury deal,
 Teach me but once like him to feel:
 His cypress wreath my meed decree,
 And I, O Fear! will dwell with thee!

O D E T O S I M P L I C I T Y .

O THOU by Nature taught,
 To breathe her genuine thought,
 In numbers warmly pure, and sweetly strong:
 Who first on mountains wild,
 In Fancy, loveliest child,
 Thy babe, and Pleasure's, nurs'd the powers of song!

 Thou, who with hermit heart
 Disdain'st the wealth of art,
 And gauds, and pageant weeds, and trailing pall:
 But com'st a decent maid,
 In Attic robe array'd,
 O chaste, unboastful nymph, to thee I call!

 By all the honney'd store
 On Hybla's thymy shore,
 By all her blooms, and mingled murmurs dear,
 By her, whose love-lorn woe,
 In evening musings flow,
 Sooth'd sweetly sad Electra's poet's ear:

 By old Cephissus deep,
 Who spread his wavy sweep

In warbled wanderings round thy green retreat,
 On whose enamel'd side,
 When holy Freedom died,
 No equal haunt allur'd thy future feet.

O sister meek of Truth,
 To my admiring youth,
 Thy sober aids and native charms infuse !
 The flowers that sweetest breathe,
 Tho' beauty cull'd the wreath,
 Still ask thy hand to range their order'd hues.

While Rome could none esteem,
 But virtue's patriot theme,
 You lov'd her hills, and led her laureat band :
 But staid to sing alone
 To one distinguish'd throne,
 And turn'd thy face, and fled her alter'd land.

No more, in hall or bower,
 The passions own thy power,
 Love, only love her forceless numbers mean :
 For thou hast left her shrine,
 Nor olive more, nor vine,
 Shall gain thy feet to bliss the fertile scene.

Tho' taste, tho' genius bless
 To some divine excess,

Faints the cold work till thou inspire the whole;
 What each, what all supply,
 May court, may charm our eye,
 Thou, only thou can'st raise the meeting foul !

Of these let others ask,
 To aid some mighty task,
 I only seek to find thy temperate vale :
 Where oft my reed might sound
 To maids and shepherds round,
 And all thy sons, O Nature ! learn my tale.

ODE ON THE POETICAL CHARACTER.

AS once, if not with light regard,
 I read aright that gifted Bard,
 (Him whose school above the rest
 His loveliest Elfin queen has blest)
 One, only one, unrival'd fair *,
 Might hope the magic girdle wear,
 At solemn turney hung on high,
 The wish of each love-darting eye ;
 Lo ! to each other nymph in turn applied,
 As if, in air unseen, some hovering hand,
 Some chaste and angel-friend to virgin-fame,
 With whisper'd spell had burst the starting band,
 It left unblest her loath'd dishonour'd side ;
 Happier hopeless fair, if never
 Her baffled hand with vain endeavour
 Had touch'd that fatal zone to her denied !
 Young Fancy thus, to me divinest name,
 To whom, prepar'd and bath'd in heaven,
 The cest of amplest power is given,
 To few the god-like gift assigns,
 To gird their blest prophetic loins,
 And gaze her visions wild, and feel unmix'd her flame.

* Florimel. See Spenser Leg. 4th.

The band, as fairy legends say,
 Was wove on that creating day,
 When he, who call'd with thought to birth
 Yon tented sky, this laughing earth,
 And drest with springs, and forests tall,
 And pour'd the main engirting all,
 Long by the lov'd Enthusiast woo'd,
 Himself in some diviner mood,
 Retiring, sat with her alone,
 And plac'd her on his saphire throne,
 The whiles, the vaulted shrine around,
 Seraphic wires were heard to sound,
 Now sublimest triumph swelling,
 Now on love and mercy dwelling;
 And she, from out the veiling cloud,
 Breath'd her magic arts aloud:
 And thou, thou rich-hair'd youth of morn,
 And all thy subject life was born!
 The dangerous passions kept aloof,
 Far from the fainted growing woof:
 But near it fate ecstatic Wonder,
 Listening the deep applauded thunder:
 And Truth, in sunny vest array'd,
 By whose the Tarfel's eyes were made;
 All the shadowy tribes of Mind,
 In braided dance their murmurs join'd,
 And all the bright uncounted Pow'rs,
 Who feed on heaven's ambrosial flowers.

Where is the Bard, whose soul can now
 Its high presuming hopes avow ?
 Where he who thinks, with rapture blind,
 This hallow'd work for him design'd ?
 High on some cliff, to heav'n up-pil'd,
 Of rude access, of prospect wild,
 Where, tangled round the jealous steep,
 Strange shades o'erbrow the vallies deep,
 And holy Genii guard the rock,
 Its glooms embrown, its springs unlock,
 While on its rich ambitious head,
 An Eden, like its own, lies spread.
 I view that oak, the fancied glades among,
 By which, as Milton lay, his evening ear,
 From many a cloud that drop'd ethereal dew,
 Nigh sph'ring'd in heaven its native strains could hear :
 On which that antient trump he reach'd was hung ;
 Thither oft his glory greeting,
 From Waller's myrtle shades retreating,
 With many a vow from Hope's aspiring tongue,
 My trembling feet his guiding steps pursue ;
 In vain—Such bliss to one alone,
 Of all the sons of soul was known,
 And Heaven, and Fancy, kindred powers,
 Have now o'erturn'd th' inspiring bowers,
 Or curtain'd close such scene from every future view.

O D E,

Written in the Year, MDCCXLVI.

HOW sleep the brave, who sink to rest,
 By all their country's wishes blest !
 When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
 Returns to deck her hallow'd mold,
 She there shall dress a sweeter sod,
 Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By Fairy hands their kneel is rung,
 By forms unseen their dirge is sung ;
 There Honour comes, a pilgrim grey,
 To bless the turf that wraps their clay,
 And Freedom shall a-while repair,
 To dwell a weeping hermit there !

O D E T O M E R C Y.

S T R O P H E.

O THOU, who sit'st a smiling bride
 By Valour's arm'd and awful side,
 Gentlest of sky-born forms, and best ador'd :
 Who oft with songs, divine to hear,
 Win'st from his fatal grasp the spear,
 And hid'st in wreaths of flowers his bloodless sword !
 Thou who, amidst the deathful field,
 By godlike chiefs alone beheld,
 Oft with thy bosom bare art found,
 Pleading for him the youth who sinks to ground :
 See, Mercy, see, with pure and loaded hands,
 Before thy shrine my country's genius stands,
 And decks thy altar still, tho' pierc'd with many a
 wound !

A N T I S T R O P H E.

When he whom even our joys provoke,
 The Fiend of Nature join'd his yoke,
 And rush'd in wrath to make our isle his prey ;
 Thy form, from out thy sweet abode,
 O'ertook him on his blasted road,
 And stop'd his wheels, and look'd his rage away.

I see recoil his sable steeds,
That bore him swift to savage deeds,
Thy tender melting eyes they own;
O Maid, for all thy love to Britain shown,
Where Justice bars her iron tower,
To thee we build a roseate bower,
Thou, thou shalt rule our queen, and share our
monarch's throne !

O D E T O L I B E R T Y.

S T R O P H E.

WH O shall awake the Spartan fire,
 And call in solemn sounds to life,
 The youths, whose locks divinely spreading,
 Like vernal hyacinths in fullen hue,
 At once the breath of fear and virtue shedding,
 Applauding Freedom lov'd of old to view?
 What new Alcæus, fancy-blest,
 Shall sing the sword, in myrtles drest,
 At Wisdom's shrine, a-whiles it flame concealing,
 (What place so fit to seal a deed renown'd?)
 Till she her brightest light'nings round revealing,
 It leap'd in glory forth, and dealt her prompted
 O Goddess! in that feeling hour, [wound!
 When most its sounds would court thy ears,
 Let not my shell's misguided power,
 E'er draw thy sad, thy mindful tears.
 No, Freedom, no, I will not tell,
 How Rome, before thy weeping face,
 With heaviest sound, a giant-statue, fell,
 Push'd by a wild and artless race,
 From off its wide ambitious base,

When Time his northern sons of spoil awoke,
 And all the blended work of strength and grace,
 With many a rude repeated stroke,
 And many a barbarous yell, to thousand fragments

E P O D E.

[broke.

2.

Yet ev'n, where'er the least appear'd,
 Th' admiring world thy hand rever'd ;
 Still, 'midst the scatter'd states around,
 Some remnants of her strength were found ;
 They saw, by what escap'd the storm,
 How wond'rous rose her perfect form ;
 How in the great, the labour'd whole,
 Each mighty master pour'd his soul !
 For sunny Florence, seat of art,
 Beneath her vines preserv'd a part,
 Till they, whom science lov'd to name,
 (O who could fear it ?) quench'd her flame.
 And lo, an humbler reliëf laid
 In jealous Pisa's olive shade !
 See small Marino joins the theme,
 Tho' least, not last in thy esteem.
 Strike, louder strike th' ennobling strings,
 To those, whose merchant sons were kings ;
 To him, who deck'd with pearly pride,
 In Adria weds his green-hair'd bride :
 Hail port of glory, wealth and pleasure !
 Ne'er let me change this Lydian measure :

Nor e'er her former pride relate,
 To sad Liguria's bleeding state.
 Ah no! more pleas'd thy haunts I seek,
 On wild Helvetia's mountains bleak:
 (Where, when the favour'd of thy choice,
 The daring archer heard thy voice;
 Forth from his eyrie rous'd in dread,
 The ravening Eagle northward fled.)
 Or dwell in willow'd meads more near,
 With those* to whom thy stork is dear:
 Those whom the rod of Alva bruis'd,
 Whose crown a British queen refus'd!
 The magic works, thou feel'st the strains,
 One holier name alone remains;
 The perfect spell shall then avail,
 Hail Nymph, ador'd by Britain, hail!

ANTISTROPHE.

Beyond the measure vast of thought,
 The works, the wizzard Time has wrought!

* The Dutch, amongst whom there are very severe penalties for those who are convicted of killing this bird. They are kept tame in almost all their towns, and particularly at the Hague, of the arms of which they make a part. The common people of Holland are said to entertain a superstitious sentiment, that if the whole species of them should become extinct, they should lose their liberties.

The Gaul, 'tis held of antique story,
 Saw Britain link'd to his now adverse strand †,
 No sea between, nor cliff sublime and hoary,
 He pass'd with unwet feet thro' all our land.
 To the blown Baltic then, they say,
 The wild waves found another way,
 Where Orcas howls, his wolfish mountains rounding !
 Till all the banded west at once 'gan rise,
 A wide wild storm even Nature's self confounding,
 With'ring her giant sons with strange uncouth
 This pillar'd earth so firm and wide, (surprise.
 By winds and inward labours torn,
 In thunders dread was push'd aside,
 And down the shouldering billows born.
 And see, like gems, her laughing train,
 The little isles on every side,
 Mon *, once hid from those who search the main,
 Where thousand Elfin shapes abide,

† This tradition is mentioned by several of our old historians. Some naturalists too have endeavoured to support the probability of the fact, by arguments drawn from the correspondent disposition of the two opposite coasts. I don't remember that any poetical use has been hitherto made of it.

* There is a tradition in the isle of Man, that a mermaid, becoming enamoured of a young man of extraordinary beauty, took an opportunity of meeting him one day as he walked on the shore, and opened her passion to him, but was received with a coldness, occasioned by his horror and surprize

And Wight who checks the west'ring tide,
 For thee consenting heaven has each bestow'd,
 A fair attendant on her sovereign pride :
 To thee this blest divorce she ow'd,
 For thou hast made her vales thy lov'd, thy last abode !

SECOND EPODE.

Then too, 'tis said, an hoary pile,
 'Midst the green navel of our isle,
 Thy shrine in some religious wood,
 O soul-enforcing Goddess, stood !
 There oft the painted native's feet
 Were wont thy form celestial meet :
 Tho' now with hopeless toil we trace
 Time's backward rolls, to find its place ;
 Whether the fiery-tressed Dane,
 Or Roman's self o'erturn'd the fane,
 Or in what heaven-left age it fell,
 'Twere hard for modern song to tell.
 Yet still, if truth those beams infuse,
 Which guide at once, and charm the Muse,

at her appearance. This however was so misconstrued by the sea-lady, that in revenge for his treatment of her, she punished the whole island, by covering it with a mist, so that all who attempted to carry on any commerce with it, either never arrived at it, but wandered up and down the sea, or were on a sudden wrecked upon its cliffs.

Beyond yon braided clouds that lie,
 Paving the light-embroider'd sky :
 Amidst the bright pavilion'd plains,
 The beauteous Model still remains.
 There happier than in islands blest,
 Or bowers by Spring or Hebe drest,
 The chiefs who fill our Albion's story,
 In warlike weeds, retir'd in glory,
 Hear their consoled Druids sing
 Their triumphs to th' immortal string.

How may the poet now unfold,
 What never tongue nor numbers told ?
 How learn delighted, and amaz'd,
 What hands unknown that fabric rais'd ?
 Even now, before his favour'd eyes,
 In Gothic pride it seems to rise !
 Yet Grecia's graceful orders join,
 Majestic thro' the mix'd design ;
 The secret builder knew to chuse,
 Each sphere-found gem of richest hues :
 Whate'er heaven's purer mold contains,
 When nearer suns emblaze its veins ;
 There on the walls the Patriot's fight
 May ever hang with fresh delight,
 And, grav'd with some prophetic rage,
 Read Albion's fame thro' every age.

Ye forms divine, ye laureat band,
 That near her inmost altar stand !
 Now soothe her, to her blissful train
 Blithe Concord's social form to gain :
 Concord, whose myrtle wand can steep
 Even Anger's blood-shot eyes in sleep :
 Before whose breathing bosom's balm,
 Rage drops his steel, and storms grow calm ;
 Her let our fires and matrons hoar
 Welcome to Briton's ravag'd shore,
 Our youths, enamour'd of the fair,
 Play with the tangles of her hair,
 Till, in one loud applauding sound,
 The nations shout to her around,
 O how supremely art thou blest,
 Thou, Lady, thou shalt rule the west !

O D E,

*To a Lady, on the Death of Colonel CHARLES
ROSS in the Action at Fontenoy.*

Written MAY, MDCCXLV.

WHILE, lost to all his former mirth,
 Britannia's genius bends to earth,
 And mourns the fatal day :
 While stain'd with blood he strives to tear
 Unseemly from his sea-green hair
 The wreaths of chearful May :
 The thoughts which musing pity pays,
 And fond remembrance loves to raise,
 Your faithful hours attend :
 Still Fancy, to herself unkind,
 Awakes to grief the soften'd mind,
 And points the bleeding friend.
 By rapid Scheld's descending wave
 His country's vows shall bless the grave,
 Where'er the youth is laid :
 That sacred spot the village hind
 With every sweetest turf shall bind,
 And Peace protect the shade.

O'er him, whose doom thy virtues grieve,
Aerial forms shall sit at eve,

And bend the pensive head !
And, fall'n to save his injur'd land,
Imperial Honour's awful hand
Shall point his lonely bed !

The warlike dead of every age,
Who fill the fair recording page,
Shall leave their fainted rest ;
And half-reclining on his spear,
Each wondering chief by turns appear,
To hail the blooming guest.

Old Edward's sons, unknown to yield,
Shall croud from Cressy's laurell'd field,
And gaze with fix'd delight :
Again for Britain's wrongs they feel,
Again they snatch the gleamy steel,
And wish th' avenging fight.

But lo where, sunk in deep despair,
Her garments torn, her bosom bare,
Impatient Freedom lies !
Her matted tresses madly spread,
To every sod, which wraps the dead,
She turns her joyless eyes.

Ne'er shall she leave that lowly ground,
Till notes of triumph bursting round

Proclaim her reign restor'd :
 Till William seek the sad retreat,
 And, bleeding at her sacred feet,
 Present the fated sword.

If, weak to soothe so soft an heart,
 These pictur'd glories nought impart,
 To dry thy constant tear :
 If yet, in Sorrow's distant eye,
 Expos'd and pale thou seest him lie,
 Wild war insulting near :

Where'er from time thou court'st relief,
 The Muse shall still, with social grief,
 Her gentlest promise keep :
 Even humble Harting's cottag'd vale
 Shall learn the sad repeating tale,
 And bid her shepherds weep.

O D E T O E V E N I N G.

IF aught of oaten stop, or pastoral song,
 May hope, chaste Eve, to soothe thy modest ear,
 Like thy own solemn springs,
 Thy springs and dying gales,

O Nymph reserv'd, while now the bright-hair'd sun
 Sits on yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts,
 With brede ethereal wove,
 O'erhang his wavy bed :

Now air is hush'd, save where the weak-ey'd bat,
 With short shrill shriek flits by on leathern wing,
 Or where the beetle winds
 His small but fullen horn,

As oft he rises 'midst the twilight path,
 Against the pilgrim born in heedless hum :
 Now teach me, Maid compos'd,
 To breathe some soften'd strain,

Whose numbers stealing thro' thy dark'ning vale,
 May not unseemly with its stillness suit,
 As musing slow, I hail
 Thy genial lov'd return !

For when thy folding-star arising shows
His paly circlet, as his warning lamp
The fragrant Hours, and Elves
Who slept in buds the day,

And many a Nymph who wreath her brows with
sedge,

And sheds the freshening dew, and lovelier still,
The pensive Pleasures sweet
Prepare thy shadowy car.

Then let me rove some wild and heathy scene,
Or find some ruin 'midst its dreary dells,
Whose walls more awful nod
By thy religious gleams.

Or if chill-blustring winds, or driving rain,
Prevent thy willing feet, be mine the hut,
That from the mountain's side,
Views wilds, and swelling floods,

And hamlets brown, and dim-discover'd spires,
And hears their simple bell, and marks o'er all
Thy dewy fingers draw
The gradual dusky veil.

While Spring shall pour his showers, as oft he wont,
And bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest Eve!
While Summer loves to sport
Beneath thy lingering light :

While fallow Autumn fills thy lap with leaves,
 Or Winter, yelling thro' the troublous air,
 Affrights thy shrinking train,
 And rudely rends thy robes :

So long regardful of thy quiet rule,
 Shall Fancy, Friendship, Science, smiling Peace,
 Thy gentlest influence own,
 And love thy favourite name !

O D E T O P E A C E

O THOU, who bad'st thy turtles bear
 Swift from his grasp thy golden hair,
 And fought'st thy native skies :
 When War, by vultures drawn from far,
 To Britain bent his iron car,
 And bad his storms arise !
 Tir'd of his rude tyrannic sway,
 Our youth shall fix some festive day,
 His fullen shrines to burn :
 But thou, who hear'st the turning spheres,
 What sounds may charm thy partial ears,
 And gain thy blest return !
 O Peace, thy injur'd robes up-bind !
 O rise, and leave not one behind
 Of all thy beamy train :
 The British lion, Goddess sweet,
 Lies stretch'd on earth to kiss thy feet,
 And own thy holier reign.
 Let others court thy transient smile,
 But come to grace thy western isle,
 By warlike Honour led !
 And, while around her ports rejoice,
 While all her sons adore thy choice,
 With him for ever wed !

THE MANNERS. AN ODE.

FAREWELL, for clearer ken design'd;
 The dim-discover'd tracts of mind:
 Truths which, from action's path retir'd,
 My silent search in vain requir'd!
 No more my sail that deep explores,
 No more I search those magic shores,
 What regions part the world of soul,
 Or whence thy streams, Opinion, roll:
 If e'er I round such Fairy field,
 Some power impart the spear and shield,
 At which the wizzard Passions fly,
 By which the giant Follies die!

Farewell the porch, whose roof is seen,
 Arch'd with th' enlivening olive's green:
 Where Science, prank'd in tiffued vest,
 By Reason, Pride, and Fancy drest,
 Comes like a bride, so trim array'd,
 To wed with Doubt in Plato's shade!

Youth of the quick uncheated sight,
 Thy walks, Observance, more invite!
 O thou, who lov'st that ampler range,
 Where life's wide prospects round thee change,

And, with her mingled sons allied,
 Throw'st the prattling page aside :
 To me in converse sweet impart,
 To read in man the native heart,
 To learn, where Science sure is found,
 From Nature as she lives around :
 And gazing oft her mirror true,
 By turns each shifting image view !
 Till meddling Art's officious lore,
 Reverse the lessons taught before,
 Alluring from a fairer rule,
 To dream in her enchanted school ;
 Thou, heaven, whate'er of great we boast,
 Hast blest this social science most.

Retiring hence to thoughtful cell,
 As Fancy breathes her potent spell,
 Not vain she finds the charming task,
 In pageant quaint, in motley mask,
 Behold, before her musing eyes,
 The countless Manners round her rise ;
 While ever varying as they pass,
 To some Contempt applies her glass :
 With these the white-rob'd Maids combine,
 And those the laughing Satyrs join !
 But who is he whom now she views,
 In robe of wild contending hues ?
 Thou by the passions nurs'd ; I greet
 The comic sock that binds thy feet !

O Humour, thou whose name is known,
 To Britain's favour'd isle alone :
 Me too amidst thy band admit,
 There where the young-eyed healthful Wit,
 (Whose jewels in his crisped hair
 Are plac'd each other's beams to share,
 Whom no delights from thee divide)
 In laughter loos'd attends thy side !

By old Miletus* who so long
 Has ceas'd his love-inwoven song :
 By all you taught the Tuscan maids,
 In chang'd Italia's modern shades :
 By him†, whose Knight's distinguish'd name
 Refin'd a nation's lust of fame ;
 Whose tales even now, with echoes sweet,
 Castilia's Moorish hills repeat :
 Or him‡, whom Seine's blue nymphs deplore,
 In watchet weeds on Gallia's shore,
 Who drew the sad Sicilian maid,
 By virtues in her fire betray'd :

O Nature boon, from whom proceed
 Each forceful thought, each prompted deed ;

* Alluding to the Milesian tales, some of the earliest romances.

† Cervantes.

‡ Monfieur Le Sage, author of the incomparable adventures of Gil Blas de Santillane, who died in Paris in the year 1745.

If but from thee I hope to feel,
On all my heart imprint thy seal !
Let some retreating Cynic find
Those oft-turn'd scrolls I leave behind,
The Sports and I this hour agree,
To rove thy scene-full world with thee !

THE PASSIONS.

An ODE for MUSIC.

WHEN Music, heavenly maid, was young,
 While yet in early Greece she sung,
 The Passions oft, to hear her shell,
 Throng'd around her magic cell,
 Exulting, trembling, raging, fainting,
 Possess'd beyond the Muse's painting;
 By turns they felt the glowing mind
 Disturb'd, delighted, rais'd, refin'd.
 Till once, 'tis said, when all were fir'd,
 Fill'd with fury, rapt, inspir'd,
 From the supporting myrtles round
 They snatch'd her instruments of sound,
 And as they oft had heard apart
 Sweet lessons of her forceful art,
 Each, for madness rul'd the hour,
 Would prove his own expressive power.

First Fear his hand, its skill to try,
 Amid the chords bewilder'd laid,
 And back recoil'd he knew not why,
 Even at the sound himself had made.

Next Anger rush'd, his eyes on fire,
 In light'nings own'd his secret stings,
 In one rude clash he struck the lyre,
 And swept with hurried hand the strings.

With woeful measures wan Despair —
 Low fullen sounds his grief beguil'd,
 A solemn, strange, and mingled air,
 'Twas sad by fits, by starts 'twas wild.

But thou, O Hope, with eyes so fair,
 What was thy delighted measure?
 Still it whisper'd promis'd pleasure,
 And bad the lovely scenes at distance hail!
 Still would her touch the scene prolong,
 And from the rocks, the woods, the vale,
 She call'd an Echo still thro' all the song;
 And where her sweetest theme she chose,

A soft responsive voice was heard at every close,
 And Hope enchanted smil'd, and wav'd her golden
 And longer had she sung,—but, with a frown, (hair.
 Revenge impatient rose,

He threw his blood stain'd sword in thunder down,
 And, with a withering look,

The war-denouncing trumpet took,
 And blew a blast so loud and dread,
 Were ne'er prophetic sounds so full of woe,
 And ever and anon he beat
 The doubling drum with furious heat:

And tho' sometimes, each dreary pause between,
 Dejected Pity at his side,
 Her soul-subduing voice applied,
 Yet still he kept his wild unalter'd mien,
 While each strain'd ball of sight seem'd bursting from
 his head.

Thy numbers, Jealousy, to nought were fix'd,
 Sad proof of thy distressful state,
 Of differing themes the veering song was mix'd,
 And now it courted Love, now raving call'd on Hate.

With eyes up-rais'd, as one inspir'd,
 Pale Melancholy sat retir'd,
 And from her wild sequester'd seat,
 In notes by distance made more sweet,
 Pour'd thro' the mellow Horn her pensive soul :
 And dashing soft from rocks around,
 Bubbling runnels join'd the sound ;
 Thro' glades and glooms the mingled measure stole,
 Or o'er some haunted streams with fond delay,
 Round an holy calm diffusing,
 Love of peace, and lonely musing,
 In hollow murmurs died away.

But O, how alter'd was its sprightlier tone !
 When Chearfulness, a nymph of healthiest hue,
 Her bow across her shoulder flung,
 Her buskins gemm'd with morning dew,
 Blew an inspiring air, that dale and thicket rung,
 The hunter's call to Faun and Dryad known ;

The oak-crown'd Sisters, and their chaste-eyed
 Satyrs and sylvan boys were seen, (queen,
 Peeping from forth their alleys green ;
 Brown Exercise rejoic'd to hear,
 And Sport leapt up and seiz'd his beechen spear.
 Last came Joy's ecstatic trial,
 He with viny crown advancing,
 First to the lively pipe his hand address,
 But soon he saw the brisk awakening viol,
 Whose sweet entrancing voice he lov'd the best.
 They would have thought, who heard the strain,
 They saw in Tempe's vale her native maids,
 Amidst the festal sounding shades,
 To some unwearied minstrel dancing,
 While, as his flying fingers kiss'd the strings,
 Love fram'd with Mirth, a gay fantastic round,
 Loose were her traces seen, her zone unbound,
 And he, amidst his frolic play,
 As if he would the charming air repay,
 Shook thousand odours from his dewy wings.
 O Music! sphere-descended maid,
 Friend of pleasure, wisdom's aid,
 Why, Goddess, why to us denied ?
 Lay'st thou thy antient lyre aside ?
 As in that lov'd Athenian bower,
 You learn'd an all commanding power,
 Thy mimic soul, O nymph endear'd !
 Can well recall what then it heard.

Where is thy native simple heart,
 Devote to virtue, fancy, art?
 Arise, as in that elder time,
 Warm, energetic, chaste, sublime!
 Thy wonders, in that god-like age,
 Fill thy recording Sister's page —
 'Tis said, and I believe the tale,
 Thy humblest reed could more prevail,
 Had more of strength, diviner rage,
 Than all which charms this laggard age,
 Even all at once together found
 Cæcilia's mingled world of sound —
 O bid our vain endeavours cease,
 Revive the just designs of Greece,
 Return in all thy simple state!
 Confirm the tales her sons relate!

A N E P I S T L E

*Addressed to Sir THOMAS HANMER, on his Edition
of SHAKESPEAR'S Works.*

WHILE born to bring the Muse's happier days,
 A patriot's hand protects a poet's lays,
 While nurs'd by you she sees her myrtles bloom,
 Green and unwither'd o'er his honour'd tomb!
 Excuse her doubts, if yet she fears to tell
 What secret transports in her bosom swell:
 With conscious awe she hears the critic's fame,
 And blushing hides her wreath at Shakespear's name,
 Hard was the lot those injur'd strains endur'd,
 Unknown by science, and by years obscur'd:
 Fair Fancy wept; and echoing sighs confess'd
 A fixt despair in every tuneful breast.
 Not with more grief th' afflicted swains appear,
 When wintry winds deform the plenteous year;
 When lingering frosts the ruin'd seats invade
 Where Peace resorted, and the Graces play'd.

Each rising art by just gradation moves,
 Toil builds on toil, and age on age improves:
 The Muse alone unequal dealt her rage,
 And grac'd with noblest pomp her earliest stage.

Preserv'd thro' time, the speaking scenes impart
 Each changeful wish of Phædra's tortur'd heart :
 Or paint the curse, that mark'd the * Theban's reign,
 A bed incestuous, and a father slain.
 With kind concern our pitying eyes o'erflow,
 Trace the sad tale, and one another's woe.

To Rome remov'd, with wit secure to please,
 The comic sisters kept their native ease.
 With jealous fear declining Greece beheld
 Her own Menander's art almost excell'd !
 But every Muse essay'd to raise in vain
 Some labour'd rival of her tragic strain ;
 Ilysius' laurels, tho' transferr'd with toil,
 Droop'd their fair leaves, nor knew th' unfriendly foil.

As arts expir'd, resistless Dulness rose ;
 Goths, priests, or Vandals,—all were Learning's foes.
 Till † Julius first recall'd each exil'd maid,
 And Cosmo own'd them in th' Etrurian shade :
 Then deeply skill'd in love's engaging theme,
 The soft Provencial pass'd to Arno's stream :
 With graceful ease the wanton lyre he strung,
 Sweet flow'd the lays—but love was all he sung.
 The gay description could not fail to move ;
 For, led by nature, all are friends to love.

* The Oedipus of Sophocles.

† Julius II. the immediate predecessor of Leo X.

But heaven, still various in its works, decreed
 The perfect boast of time should last succeed.
 The beauteous union must appear at length,
 Of Tuscan fancy and Athenian strength :
 One greater Muse Eliza's reign adorn,
 And even a Shakespear to her fame be born !

Yet ah ! so bright her morning's opening ray,
 In vain our Britain hop'd an equal day !
 No second growth the western isle could bear,
 At once exhausted with too rich a year.
 Too nicely Johnson knew the critic's part ;
 Nature in him was almost lost in art.
 Of softer mold the gentle Fletcher came,
 The next in order as the next in name.
 With pleas'd attention 'midst his scenes we find
 Each glowing thought, that warms the female mind ;
 Each melting sigh, and every tender tear,
 The lover's wishes, and the virgin's fear.
 His * every strain the Smiles and Graces own ;
 But stronger Shakespear felt for man alone :
 Drawn by his pen, our ruder passions stand
 Th' unrivall'd picture of his early hand.

† With gradual steps, and slow, exacter France
 Saw Art's fair empire o'er her shores advance :

* Their characters are thus distinguished by Mr. Dryden.

† About the time of Shakespear, the poet Hardy was in great repute in France. He wrote, according to Fontenelle,

By length of toil a bright perfection knew,
 Correctly bold, and just in all she drew.
 Till late Corneille, with † Lucan's spirit fir'd,
 Breath'd the free strain, as Rome and he inspir'd :
 And classic judgment gain'd to sweet Racine
 The temperate strength of Maro's chaster line.

But wilder far the British laurel spread,
 And wreaths less artful crown our poet's head.
 Yet He alone of every scene could give
 Th' historian's truth, and bid the manners live.
 Wak'd at his call I view, with glad surprise,
 Majestic forms of mighty monarchs rise.
 There Henry's trumpets spread their loud alarms,
 And laurel'd Conquest waits her hero's arms.
 Here gentler Edward claims a pitying sigh,
 Scarce born to honours, and so soon to die !
 Yet shall thy throne, unhappy infant, bring
 No beam of comfort to the guilty king :
 The * time shall come, when Glo'ster's heart shall
 In life's last hours, with horror of the deed : (bleed

six hundred plays. The French poets after him applied themselves in general to the correct improvement of the stage, which was almost totally disregarded by those of our own country, Johnson excepted.

† The favourite author of the elder Corneille.

* Tempus erit Turno, magno cum optaverit emptum
 Intactum pallanta, etc.

When dreary visions shall at last present
 Thy vengeful image in the midnight tent :
 Thy hand unseen the secret death shall bear,
 Blunt the weak sword, and break th' oppressive spear.

Where'er we turn, by fancy charm'd, we find
 Some sweet illusion of the cheated mind.
 Oft, wild of wing, she calls the soul to rove
 With humbler nature, in the rural grove ;
 Where swains contented own the quiet scene,
 And twilight fairies tread the circled green :
 Dress'd by her hand, the woods and vallies smile,
 And Spring diffusive decks th' enchanted isle.

O more than all in powerful genius blest,
 Come, take thine empire o'er the willing breast !
 Whate'er the wounds this youthful heart shall feel,
 Thy songs support me, and thy morals heal !
 There every thought the poet's warmth may raise,
 There native music dwells in all the lays.
 O might some verse with happiest skill persuade
 Expressive Picture to adopt thine aid !
 What wondrous draughts might rise from every page !
 What other Raphaels charm a distant age !

Methinks even now I view some free design,
 Where breathing Nature lives in every line :

Chaste and subdued the modest lights decay,
 Steal into shades and mildly melt away.
 —And see where * Anthony, in tears approv'd,
 Guards the pale reliëts of the chief he lov'd :
 O'er the cold corse the warrior seems to bend,
 Deep sunk in grief, and mourns his murder'd friend !
 Still as they press, he calls on all around,
 Lifts the torn robe, and points the bleeding wound.

But † who is he, whose brows exalted bear
 A wrath impatient, and a fiercer air ?
 Awake to all that injur'd worth can feel,
 On his own Rome he turns th' avenging steel.
 Yet shall not war's insatiate fury fall,
 (So heaven ordains it) on the destin'd wall.
 See the fond mother, 'midst the plaintive train,
 Hung on his knees, and prostrate on the plain !
 Touch'd to the soul, in vain he strives to hide
 The son's affection, in the Roman's pride :
 O'er all the man conflicting passions rise,
 Rage grasps the sword, while pity melts the eyes,

Thus, generous Critic, as thy Bard inspires,
 The sister Arts shall nurse their drooping fires ;

* See the tragedy of Julius Cæsar.

† Coriolanus. See Mr. Spence's dialogue on the Odyſſey.

Each from his scenes her stores alternate bring,
 Blend the fair tints, or wake the vocal string:
 Those Sibyl-leaves, the sport of every wind,
 (For poets ever were a careless kind)
 By thee dispos'd, no farther toil demand,
 But, just to Nature, own thy forming hand.

So spread o'er Greece, th' harmonious whole
 unknown,
 Even Homer's numbers charm'd by parts alone.
 Their own Ulysses scarce had wander'd more,
 By winds and waters cast on every shore:
 When rais'd by fate, some former Hammer join'd
 Each beauteous image of the boundless mind;
 And bade, like thee, his Athens ever claim
 A fond alliance with the Poet's name.

D I R G E

In C Y M B E L I N E.

Sung by GUIDERUS and ARVIRAGUS over FIDELE, supposed to be dead.

TO fair Fidele's grassy tomb,
Soft maid and village hinds shall bring
Each opening sweet, of earliest bloom,
And rife all the breathing Spring.

No wailing ghost shall dare appear
To vex with shrieks this quiet grove,
But shepherd lads assemble here,
And melting virgins own their love.

No wither'd witch shall here be seen,
No goblins lead their nightly crew;
The female fays shall haunt the green,
And dress thy grave with pearly dew!

The red-bread oft at evening hours
Shall kindly lend his little aid,
With hoary moss, and gather'd flowers,
To deck the ground where thou art laid.

When howling winds, and beating rain,
 In tempests shake the sylvan cell;
 Or 'midst the chace on every plain,
 The tender thought on thee shall dwell.

Each lonely scene shall thee restore,
 For thee the tear be duly shed;
 Belov'd, till life can charm no more;
 And mourn'd, till Pity's self be dead.

O D E,
ON THE
DEATH OF MR. THOMSON.

*The Scene of the following STANZAS is supposed to lie
on the THAMES, near RICHMOND.*

I.

IN yonder grave a Druid lies
Where slowly winds the stealing wave!
The year's best sweets shall duteous rise
To deck its Poet's sylvan grave!

II.

In yon deep bed of whisp'ring reeds
His airy harp * shall now be laid,
That he, whose heart in sorrow bleeds,
May love thro' life the soothing shade.

III.

Then maids and youths shall linger here,
And while its sounds at distance swell,
Shall sadly seem in Pity's ear
To hear the Woodland Pilgrim's knell.

* The harp of ÆOLUS of which see a description in the
CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

IV.

Remembrance oft shall haunt the shore
 When Thames in summer wreaths is drest,
 And oft suspend the dashing oar
 To bid his gentle spirit rest!

V.

And oft as Ease and Health retire
 To breezy lawn, or forest deep,
 The friend shall view yon whitening * spire,
 And 'mid the varied landscape weep.

VI.

But Thou, who own'st that earthly bed,
 Ah! what will every dirge avail!
 Or tears, which Love and Pity shed
 That mourn beneath the gliding sail!

VII.

Yet lives there one, whose heedless eye
 Shall scorn thy pale shrine glimm'ring near?
 With him, sweet bard, may Fancy die,
 And Joy desert the blooming year.

VIII.

But thou, lorn stream, whose fullen tide
 No sedge-crown'd Sisters now attend,
 Now waft me from the green hill's side
 Whose cold turf hides the buried friend!

* RICHMOND Church.

IX.

And see, the fairy valleys fade,
 Dun Night has veil'd the solemn shade,
 Yet once again, dear parted shade,
 Meek Nature's child, again adieu !

X.

* The genial meads assign'd to blest
 Thy life, shall mourn thy early doom;
 Their hinds and shepherd-girls shall dress
 With simple hands thy rural tomb.

IX.

Long, long, thy stone, and pointed clay
 Shall melt the musing Briton's eyes,
 O! vales, and wild woods, shall He say,
 In yonder grave Your Druid lies!

* Mr. Thomson resided in the neighbourhood of Richmond
 sometime before his death.

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

ORIENTAL ECLOGUES.

OBSERVATIONS, *etc.*

THE genius of the pastoral, as well as of every other respectable species of poetry, had its origin in the East, and from thence was transplanted by the Muses of Greece; but whether from the continent of the lesser Asia, or from Egypt, which, about the era of the Grecian pastoral, was the hospitable nurse of letters, it is not easy to determine. From the subjects and the manner of Theocritus, one would incline to the latter opinion, while the history of Bion is in favour of the former.

HOWEVER, though it should still remain a doubt through what channel the pastoral travelled westward, there is not the least shadow of uncertainty concerning its Oriental origin.

IN those ages, which, guided by sacred chronology, from a comparative view of time, we call the early ages, it appears from the most authentic historians, that the chiefs of the people employed themselves in rural exercises, and that astronomers and legislators were at the same time shepherds. Thus Strabo informs us that the history of the creation was communicated to the Egyptians by a Chaldean shepherd.

FROM these circumstances it is evident not only that such shepherds were capable of all the dignity and elegance peculiar to poetry, but that whatever poetry they attempted would be of the pastoral kind; would take its subjects from those scenes of rural simplicity in which they were conversant, and, as it was the offspring of Harmony and Nature, would employ the powers it derived from the former to celebrate the beauty and benevolence of the latter.

ACCORDINGLY we find that the most ancient poems treat of agriculture, astronomy, and other objects within the rural and natural systems.

WHAT constitutes the difference between the Georgic and the Pastoral is love, and the colloquial, or dramatic form of composition peculiar to the latter: this form of composition is sometimes dispensed with, and love and rural imagery alone are thought sufficient to distinguish the pastoral. The tender passion, however, seems to be essential to this species of poetry, and is hardly ever excluded from those pieces that were intended to come under this denomination: even in those eclogues of the Amœbean kind, whose only purport is a trial of skill between contending shepherds, love has its usual share, and the praises of their respective mistresses are the general subjects of the competitors.

IT is to be lamented that scarce any oriental compositions of this kind have survived the ravages of ig-

norance, tyranny and time; we cannot doubt that many such have been extant, possibly as far down as that fatal period, never to be mentioned in the world of letters without horror, when the glorious monuments of human ingenuity perished in the ashes of the Alexandrian library.

THOSE ingenious Greeks whom we call the parents of pastoral poetry were, probably, no more than imitators of imitators, that derived their harmony from higher and remoter sources, and kindled their poetical fires at those unextinguished lamps which burned within the tombs of oriental genius.

It is evident that Homer has availed himself of those magnificent images and descriptions so frequently to be met with in the books of the Old Testament; and why may not Theocritus, Moschus and Bion have found their archetypes in other eastern writers, whose names have perished with their works? yet, though it may not be illiberal to admit such a supposition, it would, certainly, be invidious to conclude what the malignity of cavillers alone could suggest with regard to Homer, that they destroyed the sources from which they borrowed, and, as it is fabled of the young of the pelican, drained their supporters to death.

As the septuagint-translation of the Old Testament was performed at the request, and under the patro-

nage of Ptolemy Philadelphus, it were not to be wondered if Theocritus, who was entertained at that prince's court, had borrowed some part of his pastoral imagery from the poetical passages of those books.—I think it can hardly be doubted that the Sicilian poet had in his eye certain expressions of the prophet Isaiah, when he wrote the following lines.

Νυν ἴα μὲν φορεοῖτε βατοί, φορεοῖτε δ' ἄκανθαι
 Ἄ δε καλά νάρκισσος ἐπ' ἀρκευθοῖσι κομασαι
 Πάντα δ' ἑνάλλα γενέοντο, καὶ ἅ πῖτος ὄχνας ἐνεῖκαι
 ----- καὶ τῶς κυνας ὠλαφος ἔλκοι.

Let vexing brambles the blue violet bear,
 On the rude thorn Narcissus drefs his hair—
 All, all revers'd—The pine with pears be crown'd,
 And the bold deer shall drag the trembling hound.

The cause, indeed, of these phenomena is very different in the Greek from what it is in the Hebrew poet; the former employing them on the death, the latter on the birth of an important person: but the marks of imitation are nevertheless obvious.

It might, however, be expected that if Theocritus had borrowed at all from the sacred writers, the celebrated pastoral Epithalamium of Solomon, so much within his own walk of Poetry, would not certainly have escaped his notice. His Epithalamium on the marriage of Helena, moreover, gave him an o-

pen field for imitation ; therefore, if he has any obligations to the royal bard, we may expect to find them there. The very opening of the poem is in the spirit of the Hebrew song :

Οὕτω δὲ πρῶϊζα κατεδραδεις, ὦ φιλε γαμβρε.

The colour of imitation is still stronger in the following passage :

Ἄως ἀντελλοῖσα καλὸν διεφαίνει πρόσωπον,
Ποτὶς νύξ ἄτε, λυχὸν ἴαρ χεῖμενος ἀνετός
Ὡδὲ καὶ ἡ χρυσία Ἑλένα διεφαίνεται ἐν ἡμῖν,
Πιερα, μεγάλα. ἄτ ἀνεδραμεν ὄγμος ἀντρα.
Ἥ κατὰ κυπαριστος, ἡ ἀρματι Θεσσαλὸς ἵππος.

This description of Helen is infinitely above the style and figure of the Sicilian pastoral — “ She is like the
“ rising of the golden morning, when the night de-
“ parteth, and when the winter is over and gone.
“ She resembleth the cypreïs in the garden, the
“ horse in the chariots of Theffaly.” These figures plainly declare their origin, and others equally imitative might be pointed out in the same idyllium.

THIS beautiful and luxuriant marriage-pastoral of Solomon is the only perfect form of the oriental eclogue that has survived the ruins of time ; a happiness for which it is, probably, more indebted to its sacred

character than to its intrinsic merit. Not that it is by any means destitute of poetical excellence: like all the eastern poetry, it is bold, wild and unconnected in its figures, allusions and parts, and has all that graceful and magnificent daring which characterises its metaphorical and comparative imagery.

IN consequence of these peculiarities, so ill adapted to the frigid genius of the north, Mr. COLLINS could make but little use of it as a precedent for his oriental eclogues; and even in his third eclogue, where the subject is of a similar nature, he has chosen rather to follow the mode of the Doric and the Latian pastoral.

THE scenery and subjects then of the following eclogues alone are Oriental; the style and colouring are purely European; and, for this reason, the author's preface, in which he intimates that he had the originals from a merchant who traded to the East, is omitted as being now altogether superfluous.

WITH regard to the merit of these eclogues, it may justly be asserted, that in simplicity of description and expression, in delicacy and softness of numbers, and in natural and unaffected tenderness, they are not to be equalled by any thing of the pastoral kind in the English language.

E C L O G U E I.

THIS eclogue, which is entitled *Selim*, or the Shepherd's Moral, as there is nothing dramatic in the subject, may be thought the least entertaining of the four : but it is, by no means, the least valuable. The moral precepts which the intelligent shepherd delivers to his fellow-swains and virgins, their companions, are such as would infallibly promote the happiness of the pastoral life.

IN impersonating the private *virtues*, the poet has observed great propriety, and has formed their genealogy with the most perfect judgment, when he represents them as the daughters of *truth* and *wisdom*.

THE characteristics of *Modesty* and *Chastity* are extremely happy and *peinturesque* :

Come thou, *whose thoughts as limpid springs are clear,*

To lead the train, sweet *Modesty* appear !

With thee be *Chastity*, of all afraid,

Distrusting all, a wise suspicious maid ;

Cold is her breast, *like flowers that drink the dew,*

A silken veil conceals her from the view.

The two *similes* borrowed from rural objects are not only much in character, but perfectly natural and expressive. There is, notwithstanding, this defect in the former, that it wants a peculiar propriety; for purity of thought may as well be applied to *chastity* as to *modesty*; and from this instance, as well as from a thousand more, we may see the necessity of distinguishing, in characteristic poetry, every object by marks and attributes peculiarly its own.

It cannot be objected to this eclogue that it wants both these essential *criteria* of the pastoral, love and the drama; for though it partakes not of the latter, the former still retains an interest in it, and that too very material, as it professedly consults the virtue and happiness of the lover, while it informs what are the qualities

——— that must lead to love.

E C L O G U E II.

ALL the advantages that any species of poetry can derive from the novelty of the subject and scenery, this eclogue possesses. The rout of a camel-driver is a scene that scarce could exist in the imagination of an European, and of its attendant distresses he could have no idea.—These are very happily and minutely painted by our descriptive poet. What sublime simplicity of expression ! what nervous plainness in the opening of the poem !

In silent horror o'er the boundless waste
The driver Hassan with the camels past.

The magic pencil of the poet brings the whole scene before us at once, as it were by enchantment, and in this single couplet we feel all the effect that arises from the terrible wildness of a region unenlivened by the habitations of men. The verses that describe so minutely the camel-driver's little provisions, have a touching influence on the imagination, and prepare to enter more feelingly into his future apprehensions of distress :

Bethink thee Hassan, where shall thirst assuage,
When fails this cruise, his unrelenting rage!

It is difficult to say whether his apostrophe to the "mute companions of his toils" is more to be admired for the elegance and beauty of the poetical imagery, or for the tenderness and humanity of the sentiment. He who can read it without being affected, will do his heart no injustice, if he concludes it to be destitute of sensibility:

Ye mute companions of my toils, that bear
In all my griefs a more than equal share!
Here, where no springs in murmur break away,
Or moss-crown'd fountains mitigate the day,
In vain ye hope the green delights to know,
Which plains more blest, or verdant vales bestow:
Here rocks alone, and tasteless sands are found,
And faint and sickly winds for ever howl around.

Yet in these beautiful lines there is a slight error, which writers of the greatest genius very frequently fall into.—It will be needless to observe to the accurate reader that in the fifth and sixth verses there is a verbal pleonasm, where the poet speaks of the *green* delights of *verdant* vales. There is an oversight of

the same kind, in the Manners, an Ode; where the poet says,

—— Seine's *blue* nymphs deplore,
In *watchet* weeds ——

This fault is indeed a common one, but to a reader of taste it is nevertheless disgusting; and it is mentioned here as the error of a man of genius and judgment, that men of genius and judgment may guard against it.

MR. COLLINS speaks like a true Poet as well in sentiment as expression, when, with regard to the thirst of wealth, he says,

Why heed we not, while mad we haste along,
The gentle voice of peace, or pleasure's song?
Or wherefor think the flowery mountain's side,
The fountain's murmurs, and the valley's pride,
Why think we these less pleasing to behold,
Than dreary deserts, if they lead to gold?

But, however just these sentiments may appear to those who have not revolted from nature and simplicity, had the author proclaimed them in Lombard-street, or Cheapside, he would not have been complimented with the understanding of the bellman. — A striking proof

that our own particular ideas of happiness regulate our opinions concerning the sense and wisdom of others!

It is impossible to take leave of this most beautiful eclogue without paying the tribute of admiration so justly due to the following nervous lines.

What if the lion in his rage I meet! —
 Oft in the dust I view his printed feet:
 And fearful! oft, when day's declining light
 Yields her pale empire to the mourner night,
 By hunger rous'd, he scours the groaning plain,
 Gaunt wolves and sullen tygers in his train:
 Before them death with shrieks directs their way,
 Fills the wild yell, and leads them to their prey.

This, amongst many other passages to be met with in the writings of COLLINS, shews that his genius was perfectly capable of the grand and magnificent in description, notwithstanding what a learned writer has advanced to the contrary. Nothing, certainly, could be more greatly conceived, or more adequately expressed than the image in the last couplet.

THAT deception, sometimes used in rhetoric and poetry, which presents us with an object, or sentiment contrary to what we expected, is here introduced to the greatest advantage:

Farewell the youth, whom sighs could not detain,
Whom Zara's breaking heart implor'd in vain!
Yet as thou go'st, may every blast arise—
Weak and unfelt as these rejected sighs!

But this, perhaps, is rather an artificial prettyness,
than a real, or natural beauty.

E C L O G U E . III.

THAT innocence, and native simplicity of manners, which, in the first eclogue, was allowed to constitute the happiness of love, is here beautifully described in its effects. The Sultan of Persia marries a Georgian shepherdess, and finds in her embraces that genuine felicity which unperverted nature alone can bestow. The most natural and beautiful parts of this eclogue are those where the fair Sultana refers with so much pleasure to her pastoral amusements, and those scenes of happy innocence in which she had passed her early years; particularly when, upon her first departure,

Oft as she went, she backward turn'd her view,
And bad that crook and bleating flock adieu.

This picture of amiable simplicity reminds one of that passage, where Proserpine, when carried off by Pluto, regrets the loss of the flowers she had been gathering.

Collecti flores tunicis cecidere remissis :
Tantaque simplicitas puerilibus adfuit annis,
Hæc quoque virgineum movit jactura dolorem.

E C L O G U E IV.

THE beautiful, but unfortunate country, where the scene of this pathetic eclogue is laid, had been recently torn in pieces by the depredations of its savage neighbours, when Mr. COLLINS so affectingly described its misfortunes. This ingenious man had not only a pencil to pourtray, but a heart to feel for the miseries of mankind, and it is with the utmost tenderness and humanity he enters into the narrative of Circassia's ruin, while he realizes the scene, and brings the present drama before us. Of every circumstance that could possibly contribute to the tender effect this pastoral was designed to produce, the poet has availed himself with the utmost art and address. Thus he prepares the heart to pity the distressed of Circassia, by representing it as the scene of the happiest love.

In fair Circassia, where, to love inclin'd,
Each swain was blest, for every maid was kind.

To give the circumstances of the dialogue a more affecting solemnity, he makes the time midnight, and

describes the two shepherds in the very act of flight from the destruction that swept over their country :

Sad o'er the dews, two brother shepherds fled,
Where wildering fear and desperate sorrow led :

There is a beauty and propriety in the epithet *wilder-
ing*, which strikes us more forcibly, the more we con-
sider it.

THE opening of the dialogue is equally happy, natural and unaffected ; when one of the shepherds, weary and overcome with the flight, calls upon his companion to review the length of way they had pass-
ed.—This is, certainly, painting from nature, and the thoughts, however obvious, or destitute of refinement, are perfectly in character. But as the closest pursuit of nature is the surest way to excellence in general, and to sublimity in particular, in poetical description, so we find that this simple suggestion of the shepherd is not unattended with magnificence. There is grandeur and variety in the landskip he describes :

And first review that long extended plain,
And yon wide groves, already past with pain !
Yon ragged cliff, whose dangerous path we tried !
And last, this lofty mountain's weary side.

There is, in imitative harmony, an act of expressing a slow and difficult movement by adding to the usual number of pauses in a verse. This is observable in the line that describes the ascent of the mountain :

And last || this lofty mountain's || weary side ||

Here we find the number of pauses, or musical bars, which, in an heroic verse, is commonly two, increased to three.

THE liquid melody, and the numerous sweetness of expression in the following descriptive lines is almost inimitably beautiful :

Sweet to the sight is Zabran's flowery plain,
And once by nymphs and shepherds lov'd in vain !
No more the virgins shall delight to rove
By Sargis' banks, or Irwan's shady grove ;
On Tarkie's mountain catch the cooling gale,
Or breathe the sweets of Aly's flowery vale.

Nevertheless in this delightful landskip there is an obvious fault : there is no distinction between the plain of Zabran and the vale of Aly ; they are both *flowery*, and consequently undiversified. This could not proceed from the poet's want of judgment, but from inattention : it had not occurred to him that he had

employed the epithet *flowery* twice within so short a compass; an oversight which those who are accustomed to poetical, or, indeed, to any other species of composition, know to be very possible.

NOTHING can be more beautifully conceived, or more pathetically expressed than the shepherd's apprehensions for his fair country-women, exposed to the ravages of the invaders.

In vain Circassia boasts her spicy groves,
For ever fam'd for pure and happy loves :
In vain she boasts her fairest of the fair,
Their eye's blue languish, and their golden hair !
Those eyes in tears their fruitless grief shall send ;
Those hairs the Tartar's cruel hand shall rend.

There is, certainly, some very powerful charm in the liquid melody of sounds. The editor of these poems could never read, or hear the following verse repeated without a degree of pleasure otherwise entirely unaccountable :

Their eye's *blue languish*, and their *golden hair*.

Such are the Oriental Eclogues, which we leave with the same kind of anxious pleasure we feel upon a temporary parting with a beloved friend.

O B S E R V A T I O N S

O N T H E

O D E S

DESCRIPTIVE and ALLEGORICAL.

N

OBSERVATIONS, *etc.*

THE genius of COLLINS was capable of every degree of excellence in lyric poetry, and perfectly qualified for that high province of the muse. Possessed of a native ear for all the varieties of harmony and modulation, susceptible of the finest feelings of tenderness and humanity, but, above all, carried away by that high enthusiasm, which gives to imagination its strongest colouring, he was, at once, capable of soothing the ear with the melody of his numbers, of influencing the passions by the force of his *pathos*, and of gratifying the fancy by the luxury of description.

IN consequence of these powers, but, more particularly, in consideration of the last, he chose such subjects for his lyric essays as were most favourable for the indulgence of description and allegory; where he could exercise his powers in moral and personal painting; where he could exert his invention in conferring new attributes on images or objects already known, and described, by a determinate number of characteristics; where he might give an uncommon eclat to his figures, by placing them in higher atti-

tudes, or in more advantageous lights, and introduce new forms from the moral and intellectual world into the society of impersonated beings.

SUCH, no doubt, were the advantages he derived from the descriptive and allegorical nature of his themes.

It seems to have been the whole industry of our author (and it is, at the same time, almost all the claim to moral excellence his writings can boast) to promote the influence of the social virtues, by painting them in the fairest and happiest lights.

Melior fieri tuendo,



would be no improper motto to his poems in general, but of his lyric poems it seems to be the whole moral tendency and effect. If, therefor, it should appear to some readers that he has been more indultrious to cultivate description than sentiment; it may be observed that his descriptions themselves are sentimental, and answer the whole end of that species of writing, by embellishing every feature of virtue, and by conveying, through the effects of the pencil, the finest moral lessons to the mind.

HORACE speaks of the fidelity of the ear in preference to the uncertainty of the eye; but if the mind receives conviction, it is, certainly, of very little im-

portance through what medium, or by which of the senses it is conveyed. The impressions left on the imagination may, possibly, be thought less durable than the deposits of the memory, but it may very well admit of a question whether a conclusion of reason, or an impression of imagination, will soonest make its way to the heart. A moral precept conveyed in words is only an account of truth in its effects; a moral picture is truth exemplified; and which is most likely to gain on the affections, it may not be difficult to determine.

THIS, however, must be allowed, that those works approach the nearest to perfection which unite these powers and advantages; which at once influence the imagination, and engage the memory; the former by the force of animated, and striking description, the latter by a brief but harmonious conveyance of precept: thus, while the heart is influenced through the operation of the passions, or the fancy, the effect, which might otherwise have been transient, is secured by the co-operating power of the memory, which treasures up in a short aphorism the moral of the scene.

THIS is a good reason, and this, perhaps, is the only reason that can be given, why our dramatic performances should generally end with a chain of couplets. In these the moral of the whole piece is usually

conveyed, and that assistance which the memory borrows from rhyme, as it was probably the original cause of it, gives its usefulness and propriety even there.

AFTER these apologies for the *descriptive* turn of the following odes, something remains to be said on the origin and use of *allegory* in poetical composition.

By this we are not to understand the trope in the schools, which is defined *aliud verbis, aliud sensu ostendere*, and of which Quintilian says, *Usus est, ut tristitia dicamus melioribus verbis, aut bonæ rei gratia quædam contrariis significemus*, etc. It is not the verbal, but the sentimental allegory, not allegorical expression (which, indeed, might come under the term of *metaphor*) but allegorical imagery, that is here in question.

WHEN we endeavour to trace this species of figurative sentiment to its origin, we find it coeval with literature itself. It is generally agreed that the most ancient productions are poetical, and it is certain that the most ancient poems abound with allegorical imagery.

IF, then, it be allowed that the first literary productions were poetical, we shall have little or no difficulty in discovering the origin of allegory.

AT the birth of letters, in the transition from hieroglyphical to literal expression, it is not to be wondered if the custom of expressing ideas by personal ima-

ges, which had so long prevailed, should still retain its influence on the mind, though the use of letters had rendered the practical application of it superfluous. Those who had been accustomed to express strength by the image of an elephant, swiftness by that of a panther, and courage by that of a lion, would make no scruple of substituting, in letters, the symbols for the ideas they had been used to represent.

HERE we plainly see the origin of *allegorical expression*, that it arose from the *ashes* of hieroglyphics; and if to the same cause we should refer that figurative boldness of style and imagery which distinguish the oriental writings, we shall, perhaps, conclude more justly, than if we should impute it to the superior grandeur of the eastern genius.

FROM the same source with the *verbal*, we are to derive the *sentimental* allegory, which is nothing more than a continuation of the metaphorical or symbolical expression of the several agents in an action, or the different objects in a scene.

The latter most peculiarly comes under the denomination of allegorical imagery; and in this species of allegory we include the impersonation of passions, affections, virtues and vices, *etc.* on account of which, principally, the following odes were properly termed by their author, allegorical.

WITH respect to the utility of this figurative writing, the same arguments, that have been advanced in favour of descriptive poetry, will be of weight likewise here. It is, indeed from imperfonation, or, as it is commonly termed personification, that poetical description borrows its chief powers and graces. Without the aid of this, moral and intellectual painting would be flat and unanimated, and even the scenery of material objects would be dull without the introduction of fictitious life.

THESE observations will be most effectually illustrated by the sublime and beautiful odes that occasioned them: in those it will appear how happily this allegorical painting may be executed by the genuine powers of poetical genius, and they will not fail to prove its force and utility by passing through the imagination to the heart.

O D E T O P I T Y.

BY Pella's Bard, a magic name,
 By all the griefs his thought could frame,
 Receive my humble rite :
 Long, Pity, let the nations view
 Thy sky-worn robes of tenderest blue,
 And eyes of dewy light !

The propriety of invoking Pity through the mediation of Euripides is obvious.—That admirable poet had the keys of all the tender passions, and, therefor, could not but stand in the highest esteem with a writer of Mr. COLLINS's sensibility.—He did, indeed, admire him as much as MILTON professedly did, and probably for the same reasons ; but we do not find that he has copied him so closely as the last mentioned poet has sometimes done, and particularly in the opening of Samson-Agonistes, which is an evident imitation of the following passage in the ΦΟΙΝΙΣΣΑΙ.

Ἦνυ παροιθε, θυγατερ, ὡς τυτλῶ ποδὶ
 Ὀφθαλμος ἱ συ, ναυαταισιν ασρον ὦς,
 Δευρ' εἰς το λευρον πεδον ιχνος τιθεισ' εμον.
 Προβαινε,-----

Act III. Sc. I

O

The "eyes of dewy light" is one of the happiest strokes of imagination, and may be ranked among those expressions which

— give us back the image of the mind.

Wild ARUN too has heard thy strains,
And Echo, 'midst thy native plains,
Been sooth'd, with Pity's lute.

There first the wren thy myrtles shed
On gentlest OTWAY's infant head.—

Suffex, in which country the Arun is a small river, had the honour of giving birth to OTWAY as well as to COLLINS. Both these poets became the objects of that pity by which their writings are distinguished. There was a similitude in their genius and in their sufferings. There was a resemblance in the misfortunes and in the dissipation of their lives; and the circumstances of their death cannot be remembered without pain.

THE thought of painting in the temple of Pity the history of human misfortunes, and of drawing the scenes from the tragic muse, is very happy, and in every respect worthy the imagination of COLLINS.

O D E T O F E A R.

MR. C—— who had often determined to apply himself to dramatic poetry, seems here, with the same view, to have addressed one of the principal powers of the drama, and to implore that mighty influence she had given to the genius of Shakspear:

Hither again thy fury deal,
Teach me but once like him to feel:
His cypress wreath my meed decree,
And I, O Fear, will dwell with thee!

In the construction of this nervous ode the author has shewn equal power of judgment and imagination. Nothing can be more striking than the violent and abrupt abbreviation of the measure in the fifth and sixth verses, when he feels the strong influences of the power he invokes:

Ah Fear! ah frantic Fear!
I see, I see thee near.

The editor of these poems has met with nothing in the same species of poetry, either in his own, or in

any other language, equal, in all respects, to the following description of Danger.

Danger, whose limbs of giant-mold,
 What mortal eye can fix'd behold?
 Who stalks his round and hideous form,
 Howling amidst the midnight storm,
 Or throws him on the ridgy steep
 Of some loose, hanging rock to sleep.

It is impossible to contemplate the image conveyed in the two last verses without these emotions of terror it was intended to excite. It has, moreover, the entire advantage of novelty to recommend it; for there is too much originality in all the circumstances to suppose that the author had in his eye that description of the penal situation of Cataline in the ninth *Æneid*:

—— Te, Catalina, minaci
 Pendentem scopulo ——

The archetype of the English poet's idea was in nature, and probably, to her alone he was indebted for the thought. From her, likewise, he derived that magnificence of conception, that horrible grandeur of imagery displayed in the following lines.

And those, the fiends, who near allied,
 O'er Nature's wounds, and wrecks preside;
 While Vengeance, in the lurid air,
 Lifts her red arm, expos'd and bare:
 On whom the ravening Brood of fate,
 Who lap the blood of Sorrow, wait.

That nutritive enthusiasm, which cherishes the seeds of poetry, and which is, indeed, the only soil wherein they will grow to perfection, lays open the mind to all the influences of fiction. A passion for whatever is greatly wild, or magnificent in the works of nature, seduces the imagination to attend to all that is extravagant, however unnatural. Milton was notoriously fond of high romance, and gothic *diableries*; and Collins, who in genius and enthusiasm bore no very distant resemblance to Milton, was wholly carried away by the same attachments.

Be mine to read the visions old,
 Which thy awakening bards have told:
 And, lest thou meet my blasted view,
 HOLD EACH STRANGE TALE DEVOUTLY TRUE.

On that thrice hallow'd eve, *etc.*

There is an old traditionary superstition, that on St. Mark's eve the forms of all such persons as shall die within the ensuing year, make their solemn entry into the churches of their respective parishes, as St. Patrick swam over the channel, without their heads.

ODE TO SIMPLICITY.

THE measure of the ancient ballad seems to have been made choice of for this ode, on account of the subject, and it has, indeed, an air of simplicity, not altogether unaffecting.

By all the honey'd store
 On Hybla's thymy shore,
 By all her blooms, and mingled murmurs dear,
 By her whose love-lorn woe,
 In evening musings flow,
 Sooth'd sweetly sad Electra's poet's ear.

This allegorical imagery of the honey'd store, the blooms, and mingled murmurs of Hybla, alluding to the sweetness and beauty of the *attic* poetry, has the finest and the happiest effect: yet, possibly, it will bear a question whether the ancient Greek tragedians had a general claim to simplicity in any thing more than the plans of their drama. Their language, at least, was infinitely metaphorical; yet it must be owned that they justly copied nature and the passions, and so far, certainly, they were entitled to the palm of true simplicity: the following most beautiful speech

of Polynices will be a monument of this so long as poetry shall last.

-----πολυδακρυς δ'αφικομένη

Χρονιος ιδων μελαθρα, και βωμους θεων,
Γυμνασια θ', οισιν ενετραπην, Διρκης θ' υδωρ.

Ων η δικαιως ατελαθεις, ξενην πολιν

Ναιω, δι' οσων ομμ' εχων δακρυροον.

Αλλ' (εκ γαρ αλγυς αλγος) αυ σε δερκομαι

Καρα ξυρakes, και πεπλυσ μελαγχιμυς

Εκυσαν.

EURIP.

But staid to sing alone
To one distinguish'd throne.

The poet cuts off the prevalence of Simplicity among the Romans with the reign of Augustus; and indeed, it did not continue much longer, most of the compositions, after that date, giving into false and artificial ornament.

No more in hall or bower,
The passions own thy power,
Love, only love her forceless numbers mean.

In these lines the writings of the Provencial poets are principally alluded to, in which, simplicity is generally sacrificed to the rapsodies of romantic love.

O D E

On the Poetical Character.

Procul ! O ! procul este profani !

THIS ode is so infinitely abstracted and replete with high enthusiasm, that it will find few readers capable of entering into the spirit of it, or of relishing its beauties. There is a style of sentiment as utterly unintelligible to common capacities, as if the subject were treated in an unknown language ; and it is on the same account that abstracted poetry will never have many admirers. The authors of such poems must be content with the approbation of those heaven-favoured geniuses, who, by a familiarity of taste and sentiment, are enabled to penetrate the high mysteries of inspired fancy, and to pursue the loftiest flights of enthusiastick imagination. Nevertheless the praise of the distinguished few is certainly preferable to the applause of the undiscerning million ; for all praise is valuable in proportion to the judgment of those who confer it.

As the subject of this ode is uncommon, so are the style and expression highly metaphorical and abstract-

ed; thus the sun is called "the rich-hair'd youth of
 "morn," the ideas are termed "the shadowy tribes
 "of mind," *etc.* We are struck with the propriety
 of this mode of expression here, and it affords us new
 proofs of the analogy that subsists between language
 and sentiment.

Nothing can be more loftily imagined than the
 creation of the Cestus of Fancy in this ode: the alle-
 gorical imagery is rich and sublime: and the obser-
 vation that, the dangerous passions kept aloof, during
 the operation, is founded on the strictest philosophical
 truth; for poetical fancy can exist only in minds that
 are perfectly serene, and in some measure abstracted
 from the influences of sense.

THE scene of Milton's "inspiring hour" is per-
 fectly in character, and described with all those wild-
 wood appearances, of which the great poet was so en-
 thusiastically fond:

I view that oak, the fancied glades among,
 By which, as Milton lay, his evening ear,
 Nigh sph'ring'd in heaven its native strains could hear.

O D E,

Written in the Year, MDCCXLVI.

* * * *

O D E T O M E R C Y.

THE ode written in 1746, and the ode to Mercy, seem to have been written on the same occasion, viz. the late rebellion; the former in memory of those heroes who fell in defence of their country, the latter to excite sentiments of compassion in favour of those unhappy and deluded wretches who became a sacrifice to public justice.

THE language and imagery of both are very beautiful, but the scene and figures described in the strophe of the ode to Mercy are exquisitely striking, and would afford a painter one of the finest subjects in the world.

O D E T O L I B E R T Y.

THE ancient states of Greece, perhaps the only ones in which a perfect model of liberty ever existed, are naturally brought to view in the opening of the poem.

Who shall awake the Spartan fire,
And call in solemn sounds to life,
The youths whose locks divinely spreading,
Like vernal hyacinths in fullen hue, *etc?*

There is something extremely bold in this imagery of the locks of the Spartan youths, and greatly superior to that description Jocasta gives us of the hair of Polyxenes:

Βοσρυχῶν τε κυανοχράτα χαιτάς
Πλοκαμον.-----

What new Alcæus, fancy-blest,
Shall sing the sword, in myrtles drest, *etc?*

This alludes to a fragment of Alcæus still remaining, in which the poet celebrates Harmodius and Aristogi-

ton, who slew the tyrant Hipparchus, and thereby restored the liberty of Athens.

THE fall of Rome is here most nervously described in one line :

With heaviest found, a giant-statue, fell.

The thought seems altogether new, and the imitative harmony in the structure of the verse is admirable.

AFTER bewailing the ruin of ancient liberty, the poet considers the influence it has retained, or still retains, among the moderns ; and here the republics of Italy naturally engage his attention.—Florence, indeed, only to be lamented on the account of losing its liberty under those patrons of letters, the Medicean family ; the *jealous* Pisa, justly so called in respect to its long impatience and regret under the same yoke ; and the small Marino, which, however unrespectable with regard to power or extent of territory, has, at least, this distinction to boast, that it has preserved its liberty longer than any other state ancient or modern, having, without any revolution, retained its present mode of government near 1400 years. Moreover the patron saint who founded it, and from whom it takes its name, deserves this poetical record, as he is, perhaps, the only saint that ever contributed to the establishment of freedom.

Nor e'er her former pride relate,
To sad Liguria's bleeding state.

In these lines the poet alludes to those ravages in the state of Genoa, occasioned by the unhappy divisions of the Guelphs and Ghibelines.

—When the favour'd of thy choice,
The daring archer heard thy voice.

For an account of the celebrated event referred to in these verses, see Voltaire's Epistle to the King of Prussia.

Those whom the rod of Alva bruis'd,
Whose crown a British queen refus'd!

THE Flemings were so dreadfully oppressed by this sanguinary general of Philip the second, that they offered their sovereignty to Elizabeth; but, happily for her subjects, she had policy and magnanimity enough to refuse it. *Deformeaux*, in his *Abrégé Chronologique de l'Histoire d'Espagne*, thus describes the sufferings of the Flemings. “ Le Duc d'Albe achevoit de réduire les Flamands au désespoir. Après avoir inondé les échafauts du sang le plus noble et le plus précieux, il faisoit construire des citadelles en di-

vers endroits, et vouloit établir l'*Alcavala*, ce tribut onéreux qui avoit été longtems en usage parmi les Espagnols."

Abreg. Chron. Tom. IV.

———Mona,

Where thousand Elfin shapes abide.

Mona is properly the Roman name of the Isle of Anglesey, anciently so famous for its Druids; but sometimes, as in this place, it is given to the Isle of Man. Both these isles still retain much of the genius of superstition, and are now the only places where there is the least chance of finding a fairy.

O D E,

*To a Lady, on the Death of Colonel CHARLES
ROSS in the Action at Fontenoy.*

Written MAY, MDCCXLV.

THE iambic kind of numbers, in which this ode is conceived, seems as calculated for tender and plaintive subjects, as for those where strength or rapidity is required—This, perhaps, is owing to the repetition of the strain in the same stanza; for sorrow rejects variety, and affects an uniformity of complaint. It is needless to observe that this ode is replete with harmony, spirit, pathos; and there, surely, appears no reason why the seventh and eighth stanzas should be omitted in that copy printed in Doddsley's collection of poems.

O D E T O E V E N I N G.

THE blank ode has for some time solicited admission into the English poetry; but its efforts hitherto seem to have been vain, at least its reception has been no more than partial. It remains a question, then, whether there is not something in the nature of blank verse less adapted to the lyric than to the heroic measure, since, though it has been generally received in the latter, it is yet unadopted in the former. In order to discover this, we are to consider the different modes of these different species of poetry. That of the heroic is uniform; that of the lyric is various: and in these circumstances of uniformity and variety, probably, lies the cause why blank verse has been successful in the one, and unacceptable in the other. While it presented itself only in one form, it was familiarized to the ear by custom; but where it was obliged to assume the different shapes of the lyric muse, it seemed still a stranger of uncouth figure, was received rather with curiosity than with pleasure, and entertained without that ease, or satisfaction, which acquaintance and familiarity produce — Moreover, the heroic blank verse obtained a sanction of infinite importance to its general reception, when it

was adopted by one of the greatest poets the world ever produced, and was made the vehicle of the noblest poem that ever was written. When this poem at length extorted that applause which ignorance and prejudice had united to withhold, the versification soon found its imitators, and became more generally successful than even in those countries from whence it was imported. But lyric blank verse has met with no such advantages; for Mr. Collins, whose genius and judgment in harmony might have given it so powerful an effect, has left us but one specimen of it in the Ode to Evening.

In the choice of his measure he seems to have had in his eye Horace's ode to Pyrrha; for this ode bears the nearest resemblance to that mixt kind of the asclepiad and pherecratic verse; and that resemblance in some degree reconciles us to the want of rhyme, while it reminds us of those great masters of antiquity, whose works had no need of this whimsical jingle of sounds.

FROM the following passage one might be induced to think that the poet had it in view to render his subject and his versification suitable to each other on this occasion, and that, when he addressed himself to the sober power of evening, he had thought proper to lay aside the foppery of rhyme;

Then let me rove some wild and heathy scene,
 Or find some ruin 'midst its dreary dells,
 Whose walls more awful nod
 By thy religious gleams.

Then appears his taste for what is wildly grand and magnificent in nature; when, prevented by storms from enjoying his evening walk, he wishes for a situation,

That from the mountain's side,
 Views wilds and swelling floods.

And, through the whole, his invariable attachment to the expression of painting;

——— and marks o'er all
 Thy dewy fingers draw
 The gradual, dusky veil.

It might be a sufficient encomium on this beautiful ode to observe, that it has been particularly admired by a lady to whom Nature has given the most perfect principles of taste. She has not even complained of the want of rhyme in it, a circumstance by no means unfavourable to the cause of lyric blank verse; for surely, if a fair reader can endure an ode without bells and chimes, the masculine genius may dispense with them.

THE MANNERS. AN ODE.

FROM the subject and sentiments of this ode, it seems not improbable that the author wrote it about the time when he left the University; when, weary with the pursuit of academical studies, he no longer confined himself to the search of theoretical knowledge, but commenced the *scholar of humanity*, to study nature in her works, and man in society.

THE following farewell to science exhibits a very just as well as striking picture; for however exalted in the theory the Platonic doctrines may appear, it is certain that Platonism and Pyrrhonism are nearly allied:

Farewell the porch, whose roof is seen
Arch'd with th' enlivening olive's green:
Where Science, prank'd in tissued vest,
By Reason, Pride, and Fancy drest,
Comes like a bride, so trim array'd,
To wed with Doubt in Plato's shade!

When the mind goes in pursuit of visionary systems, it is not far from the regions of doubt; and the greater its capacity to think abstractedly, to reason and re-

fine, the more it will be exposed to and bewildered in uncertainty.—From an enthusiastic warmth of temper, indeed, we may for a while be encouraged to persist in some adopted system; but when that enthusiasm, which is founded on the vivacity of the passions, gradually cools and dies away with them, the opinions it supported drop from us, and we are thrown upon the inhospitable shore of doubt.—A striking proof of the necessity of some moral rule of wisdom and virtue, and some system of happiness established by unerring knowledge and unlimited power!

IN the poet's address to Humour in this ode, there is one image of singular beauty and propriety. The ornaments in the hair of *wit* are of such a nature, and disposed in such a manner, as to be perfectly symbolical and characteristic:

Me too amidst thy band admit,
 There, where the young-ey'd, healthful Wit,
 (Whose jewels in his crisped hair
 Are plac'd each other's beams to share,
 Whom no delights from thee divide)
 In laughter loos'd attends thy side.

Nothing could be more expressive of wit, which consists in a happy collision of comparative and relative

images, than this reciprocal reflection of light from the disposition of the jewels.

O Humour, thou whose name is known
To Briton's favour'd isle alone!

The author could only mean to apply this to the time when he wrote, since other nations had produced works of great humour as he himself acknowledges afterwards.

By old Miletus, *etc.*

By all you taught the Tuscan maids, *etc.*

The Milesian and Tuscan romances were by no means distinguished for humour; but as they were the models of that species of writing in which humour was afterwards employed, they are, probably for that reason only, mentioned here.

THE PASSIONS.

An Ode for Music.

IF the music, which was composed for this ode, had equal merit with the ode itself, it must have been the most excellent performance of the kind, in which poetry and music have, in modern times, united. Other pieces of the same nature have derived their greatest reputation from the perfection of the music that accompanied them, having in themselves little more merit than that of an ordinary ballad: but in this we have the whole soul and power of poetry—Expression that, even without the aid of music, strikes to the heart; and imagery, of power enough to transport the attention without the forceful alliance of corresponding sounds! what, then, must have been the effect of these united!

It is very observable that though the measure is the same, in which the musical efforts of fear, anger and despair are described, yet by the variation of the cadence, the character and operation of each is strongly expressed: thus particularly of despair:

With woeful measures wan Despair——
 Low fullen sounds his grief beguil'd,
 A solemn, strange and mingled air,
 'Twas sad by fits ; by starts 'twas wild.

He must be a very unskilful composer who could not catch the power of imitative harmony from these lines.

THE picture of Hope that follows this is beautiful almost beyond imitation. By the united powers of imagery and harmony, that delightful Being is exhibited with all the charms and graces that pleasure and fancy have appropriated to her :

Relegat, qui semel percurrit ;
 Qui nunquam legit, legat.

But thou, O Hope ! with eyes so fair,

What was thy delighted measure ?
 Still it whisper'd promis'd pleasure,

And had the lovely scenes at distance hail !
 Still would her touch the strain prolong,

And from the rocks, the woods, the vale,
 She call'd on Echo still thro' all the song ;

And where her sweetest theme she chose,

A soft responsive voice was heard at every close,

And Hope enchanted smil'd, and wav'd her golden hair.

In what an exalted light does the above stanza place this great master of imagery and harmony ! what varied sweetness of numbers ! what delicacy of judgment and expression ! how characteristically does Hope prolong her strain, repeat her soothing closes, call upon her associate Echo for the same purposes, and display every pleasing grace peculiar to her !

And Hope enchanted smil'd, and wav'd her golden
hair.

Legat, qui nunquam legit ;
Qui semel percurrit, relegat.

The descriptions of joy, jealousy and revenge are excellent, though not equally so ; those of melancholy and cheerfulness are superior to every thing of the kind ; and, upon the whole, there may be very little hazard in asserting that this is the finest ode in the English language.

A N E P I S T L E

*Addressed to Sir THOMAS HANMER, on his Edition
of SHAKESPEAR'S Works.*

THIS poem was written by our author at the university, about the time when Sir Thomas Hanmer's pompous edition of Shakespear was printed at Oxford. If it has not so much merit as the rest of his poems, it has still more than the subject deserves. The verification is easy and genteel, and the allusions always poetical. The character of the poet Fletcher in particular is very justly drawn in this epistle.

D I R G E

In C Y M B E L I N E.

* * * * *

O D E,

O N T H E

D E A T H O F M R. T H O M S O N.

MR. COLLINS had *skill to complain*. Of that mournful melody and those tender images which are the distinguishing excellencies of such pieces as bewail departed friendship, or beauty, he was

an almost unequalled master. He knew perfectly to exhibit such circumstances, peculiar to the objects, as awaken the influences of pity ; and while, from his own great sensibility, he felt what he wrote, he naturally addressed himself to the feelings of others.

To read such lines as the following, all beautiful and tender as they are, without corresponding emotions of pity, is surely impossible :

The tender thought on thee shall dwell.

Each lonely scene shall thee restore,
For thee the tear be duly shed ;
Belov'd, 'till life can charm no more ;
And mourn'd, 'till Pity's self be dead.

The ode on the death of Thomson seems to have been written in an excursion to Richmond by water. The rural scenery has a proper effect in an ode to the memory of a poet, much of whose merit lay in descriptions of the same kind, and the appellations of " Druid" and " meek nature's child" are happily characteristic. For the better understanding of this ode, it is necessary to remember that Mr. Thomson lies buried in the church of Richmond.

T H E E N D.



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